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HOW TO USE THIS EGUIDE

This *Mortal Kombat* eGuide has a custom navigation system to allow you to easily find content within the eGuide and move between sections as you choose.

The main menu puts all of the eGuide sections for *Mortal Kombat* at your fingertips. You can select the Menu button from any eGuide page to return to the main menu at any time.

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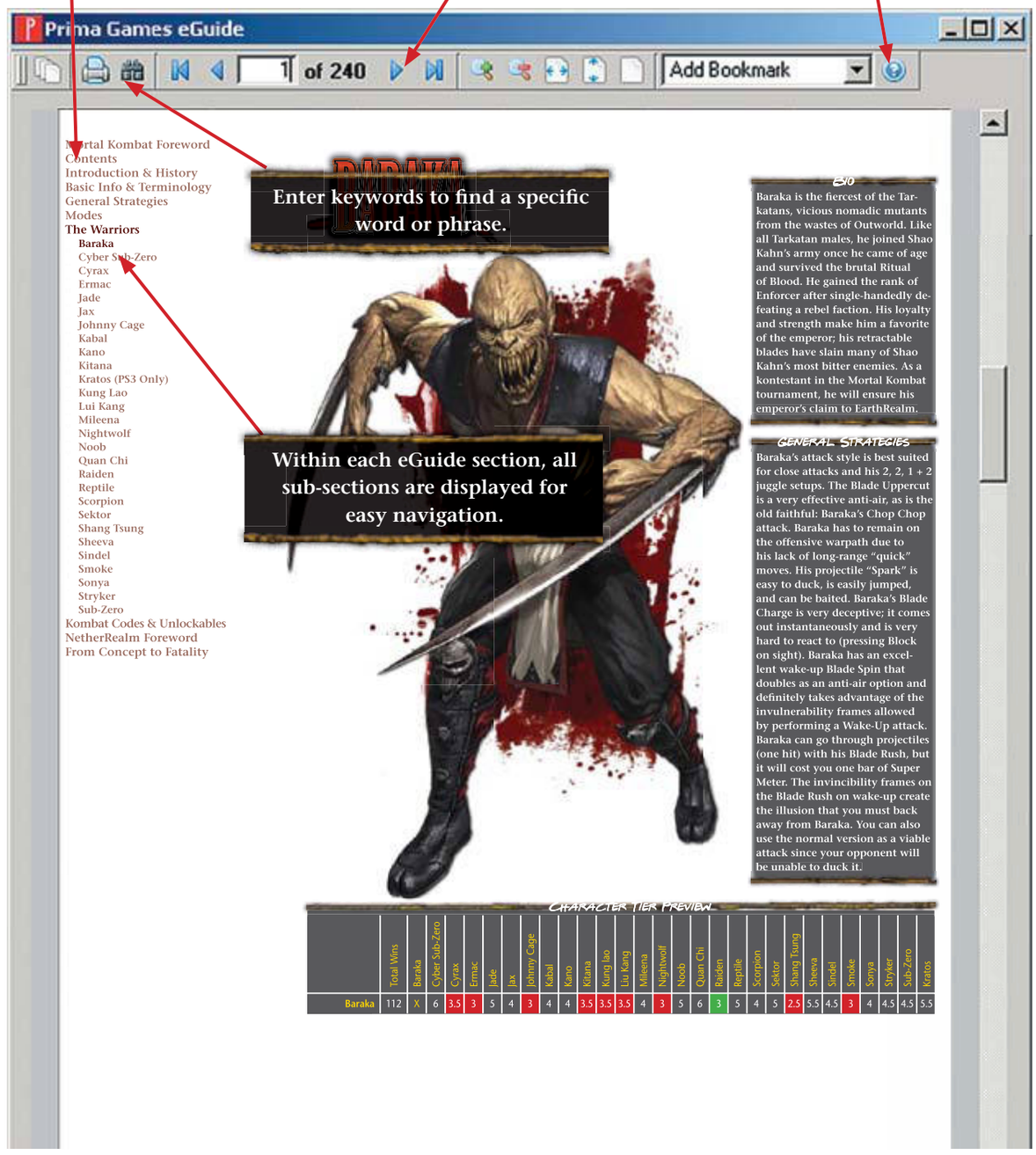

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FOREWORD

Five years. That's how long it's been since the last M-rated *Mortal Kombat* hit the shelves. It doesn't sound like a long time, but within those five years, we have witnessed the introduction of the next generation of gaming consoles, the first teen-rated *Mortal Kombat*, and the formation of NetherRealm Studios.

We have seen the rebirth of the fighting game genre, spurred along by a return to the gameplay that hooked us as kids in the arcades so many years ago.

And now, in 2011, we see the release of a new *Mortal Kombat*. A *Mortal Kombat* that is both fresh and exciting while staying comfortably familiar. A *Mortal Kombat* that is a return to the roots of what made it one of the biggest gaming franchises in history. A *Mortal Kombat* that is a return to the classic 2-D gameplay and M-rated presentation.

The *Mortal Kombat* that you, the fan, have been waiting five long years for.

I speak emphatically for all of NetherRealm Studios when I say that we could not be more excited for you to experience this latest saga in the *Mortal Kombat* universe, and we hope that the passion and dedication we have poured into creating it shines through.

This one is for you!

John Edwards
Lead Designer
NetherRealm Studios

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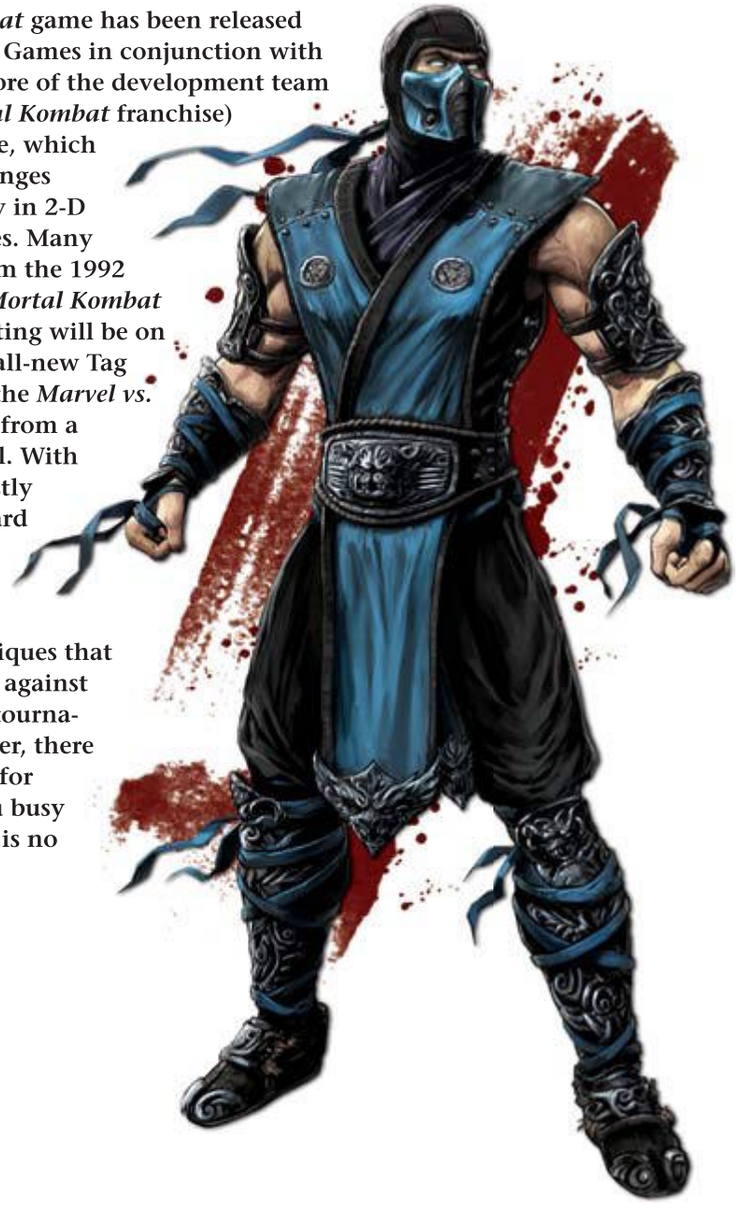
INTRODUCTION & HISTORY

INTRODUCTION

One of the longest running and respected fighting games of our generation is back and gorier than ever with *Mortal Kombat*, a reboot of the classic fighting game series for the PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360. Fans of the earlier *Mortal Kombat* games, especially those from the competitive tournament days of *Mortal Kombat II* and *Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3*, will be pleased to know that the game was developed entirely in 2-D. While the gameplay itself does contain the basics from *Mortal Kombat vs. DC Universe*, the engine has been completely overhauled with new animations for every move and character, and the game is faster and infinitely more aggressive.



This also marks the first time a *Mortal Kombat* game has been released by a publisher other than Midway Games. WB Games in conjunction with NetherRealm Studios (which still retains the core of the development team from many of the previous games in the *Mortal Kombat* franchise) has maintained their stance from the last game, which does away with fighting style and weapon changes for each character. The gameplay is completely in 2-D with gorgeous 3-D backgrounds and landscapes. Many stages are reminiscent of classic backdrops from the 1992 *Mortal Kombat* game, *Mortal Kombat II*, and *Mortal Kombat 3*. Once again, the focus on close-quarters fighting will be on hand-to-hand combat and offensive style. An all-new Tag mode (similar to *Tekken Tag Tournament* and the *Marvel vs. Capcom* games) was included that allows help from a teammate in a 2 vs. 2 sensational bloody brawl. With the gameplay elements and depth being so vastly different between Tag mode and 1 vs. 1 Standard mode, Mortal Kombat contains two completely different fighting games in one package.

This guide has been specially designed to concentrate on the basics and advanced techniques that will ensure you become a better player online, against your friends, or in competitive fighting game tournaments. If you aren't a serious tournament player, there are still plenty of techniques and information for the single-player experience that will keep you busy for weeks! Now, read on and remember: There is no knowledge that is not power!

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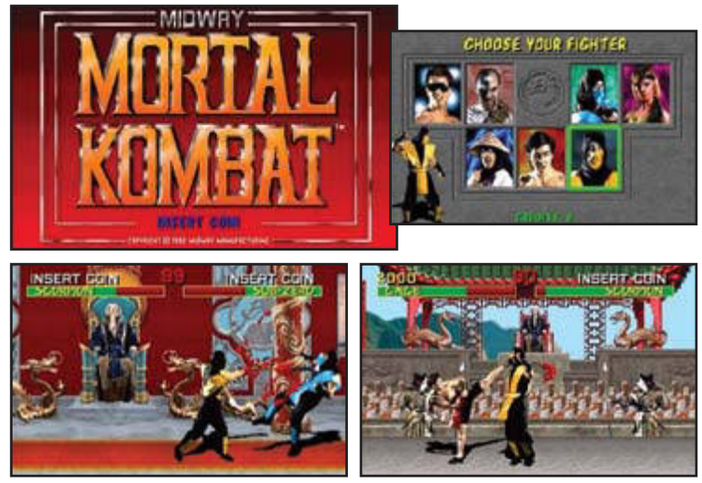
History

For nearly 20 years, the *Mortal Kombat* series has been action-packed, with everything from animalities to fatalities. The majority of fighting game fans have played some type of *Mortal Kombat* game, but with the re-launch of a new series nearly 20 years later, many players are unaware of the competitive, behind-the-scenes history of this legendary franchise.

Mortal Kombat (Arcade, 1992)



Released around the time when *Street Fighter II: Champion Edition* was king of the arcades, *Mortal Kombat* took game rooms across the country by storm. No longer were lines dominating around *Street Fighter*. Players flocked to see the blood and gore of the special "finishing moves" that each of the seven playable characters laid on their opponents, not even realizing that these gory fatalities had no effect on actual gameplay. The gameplay was very basic, introducing the Away-Toward moves (still in use today) set for many characters. This set the foundation for the "secretive nature" of the game with a secret character named Reptile, who could fight on only the Pit stage under specific circumstances, and the mysterious "Ermac," found in the diagnostics test menu, who began to bring up many questions that could not be answered.

Eventually the series made its way to home systems with "Mortal Monday" commercials leading to massive sales for the Sega Genesis version, which had all the blood and gore of the arcade version via a code intact, and a Super Nintendo version, which suffered from poor controls and backlash among gamers for its lack of authenticity due to toned down fatalities, lack of blood, and subpar gameplay. *Mortal Kombat* made its way to Game Boy, Game Gear, Sega Master System, and even the Sega CD, complete with an authentic arcade soundtrack! Many "serious" fighting game players across the country had started to gain interest in *Mortal Kombat*, which was just the beginning....

Mortal Kombat II (Arcade, 1993)

In November of 1993, the "king" of fighting games in arcades was *Mortal Kombat II*. The addition of character-based sweeps, crouching low punches, low kicks, and high kicks, as well as overall faster gameplay speed, better graphics, and multiple finishing moves per character (including the introduction of babalities and friendships) made way for nearly two years of secrets, Internet theories, and players selling lists of moves and fatalities at local arcades.

Mortal Kombat II became more popular than any fighting game for the next eight years, and players cherished the secrecy and rumors that seemed to only magnify the popularity of the game. The addition of the secret characters Jade, Noob Saibot, and Smoke and the ability to play as Sonya and Kano (both were chained in the background in one stage) kept theories flying among

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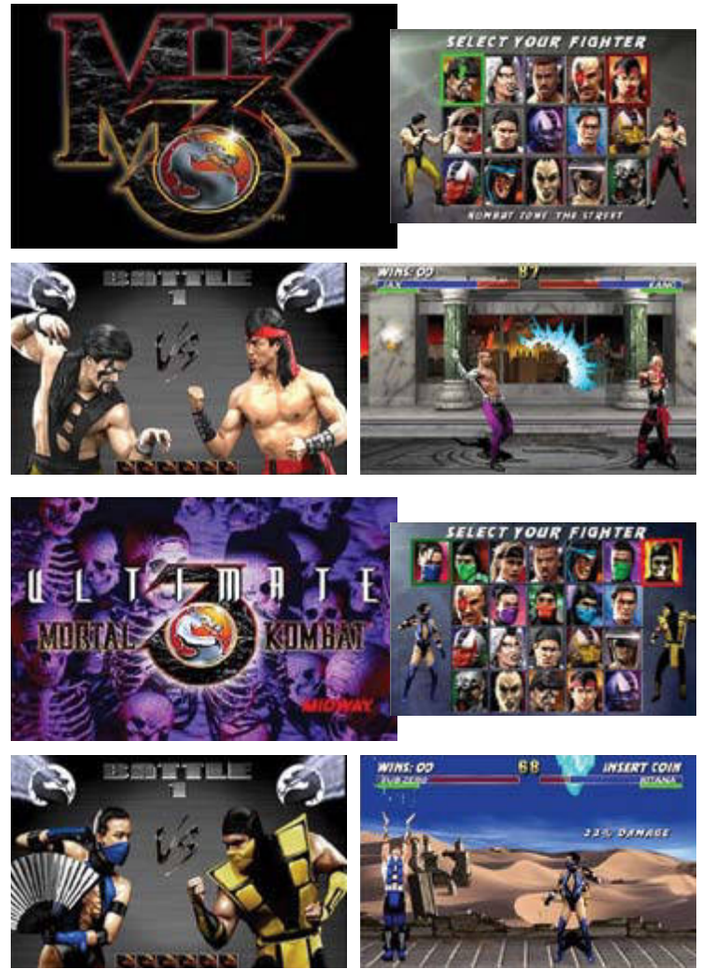
various message-board posters. The most infamous theory was the operator menu bookkeeping "Kano Transformations" moniker that kept player interest very high many years after the game's release.

Other interesting features include Kitana and Mileena "nudalities," a "hook" fatality in the Acid Pits, and playing as Kintaro (you could turn into him with a complex fatality, giving Shang Tsung three different fatalities). Competition was fierce and video-game magazines began featuring competitive strategies from well-known expert-level players in California. The introduction of the online matchmaking service of XBAND increased even more awareness for the Sega Genesis and Super Nintendo versions, with tens of thousands using this pre-broadband Internet service to play one another. Top online and offline tournament players included Jason "Lord Kwame" Cole, Jason "Mk2Assassin" De Heras, Jason "Dream Theater" Wilson, Martin Vega, Mr. Joker, Harkonen!!!, Jon "The Master Jon" Long, Graham Wolfe, and Eddie Ferrier.

Mortal Kombat 3 and Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3 (Arcade 1995)



With the hype of *Mortal Kombat* at an all-time high, Midway distributed completed arcade machines with running VHS demos of *Mortal Kombat 3* in action, one of the biggest teases ever done in the history of arcade games. Before they were known as Sektor and Cyrax, their placeholder names, Ketchup and Mustard, were frequenting the running demo. And the most unique gameplay addition change that to this day is still debated among the Mortal Kombat elite: the addition of the Run button. Complaints among players about the "speed" of *Mortal Kombat II* led to the inclusion of the Run button and chain combos, creating a very high-speed, high-paced atmosphere.

Kombat Kodes were also added; with these, two players could input a code, allowing them to agree on specific game decisions, such as disabling throws, playing on certain stages, or modifying other aspects of gameplay. With many high-damage combos and exploitations in the original *MK3* game, an upgrade was available to operators that added new characters and rebalanced gameplay from the original *Mortal Kombat 3* characters, which had some highly questionable tactics. The most influential were Sub-Zero's Ice Clone and overall damage being modified, Kabal's damage on his main chain combo being significantly lowered, Cyrax not being able to trap opponents with nets and bombs for 100 percent combos, Jax's projectile being slowed down so you could not immediately throw one instantly after tossing one at an opponent, and Liu Kang not being able to do his chain combo after a bicycle kick (it was strictly limited to the corner only).

The addition of popular stalwarts such as Reptile, Scorpion, and Mileena were well received by fans and new characters such as Smoke (and his alter ego Human Smoke) and Ermac made their way up the tier list. Competitive play was staggered across the country in this game, as the XBAND versions were subpar with insane amounts of slowdown. This made the XBAND Super Nintendo version of *Mortal Kombat 3* unplayable.

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However, if you were fortunate enough to live in Chicago from 1996 to 1998, you could play opponents all over the city, as certain arcades were linked up. T1 broadband lines played an alternate version of *Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3* with Noob Saibot as a selectable character. Rain still appeared in the opening sequence for this version as well but was not selectable. Wavenet locations with top players flooded the lines night and day at Friar Tuck's, Dennis' Place for Games, Diversions, Enchanted Castle, Waveland Bowling, Time Out at North Pier, Gala Lanes, and Times Square Arcade. Players such as Alex "Lex" Gilliam, Paulo Garcia, Adam Hernandez, Eddie Ferrier, Moe Mansour, Erik "Thrower" Calderon, Ahn Lu, and "Teacher" Lee were all recognized as being top Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3 players in the country back in the day.

Mortal Kombat 4 (Arcade, 1997)

Three years was a long time to wait for a new version of Mortal Kombat, as many players had been spoiled over the years by quick releases, but the hype train for *Mortal Kombat 4* was enormous. A *Mortal Kombat 4* "Road Tour" was announced with stopovers at various arcades across the country, including Palace Park in Irvine, California; Enchanted Castle in Lombard, Illinois; and Grand Prix-Race-O-Rama in Dania, Florida. Dedicated cabinets featuring a new character emblazoned on the side art (Quan Chi) were rolled out for players who traveled all over the country to get a glimpse of the early gameplay action. Early versions of the game had Noob Saibot as a playable character in the middle of the screen (eventually replaced by Reiko) and introduced jump-in attacks to sweeps and a 3-D dodge move that allowed you to avoid projectiles by pressing the Run button twice. Jax's Quad Slam could be done six times if you knew a secret button combination after initiating a throw (this has returned in the current incarnation of *Mortal Kombat*).

For many months, Chicago players were rewarded with the capability of playing early "test" versions of the game in various locations around the city. Some of these versions had earlier music that ended up being scrapped in the final version of the game but was still intact on the MK4 "Musik" soundtrack that could be obtained via mail order. In particular, Diversions had a 39-inch deluxe *Mortal Kombat 4* cabinet with a VHS recorder inside that was removed daily during the early testing phases and helped with the overall balance and bug-testing process. The first and only national *Mortal Kombat 4* tournament with *Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3* and *Mortal Kombat II* side tournaments was held in 1998 at Super Just Games in Northbrook, Illinois, with top players from all over the country in attendance. Paulo Garcia took the *Mortal Kombat 4* tournament, Ahn Lu won the *Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3* tournament, and Jason Wilson won the *Mortal Kombat II* tournament.

The 3-D Years

Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance (PlayStation 2, Xbox; 2002)

Mortal Kombat: Deception (PlayStation 2, Xbox; 2004)

Mortal Kombat: Armageddon (PlayStation 2, Xbox; 2006)

Mortal Kombat vs. DC Universe (PlayStation 3, Xbox 360; 2008)

The games listed here were the first "3-D" *Mortal Kombat* games. While they were also released on Nintendo GameCube and Wii, they were not used in competitive tournaments. With *Mortal Kombat 4* being the last arcade *Mortal Kombat* game, Midway concentrated specifically on consoles, and the MK balance shifted to a more *Tekken/Virtua Fighter*–oriented gameplay style. Juggles were still intact, but *Tekken* and *Virtua Fighter* veterans had distinctive advantages with their experience in the dodging, low, and mid game.

Mortal Kombat: Deception was insanely popular, with players loyal to other fighting game series flocking to *Mortal Kombat: Deception* online, but it would take another four years with the release of *Mortal Kombat vs. DC Universe* for competitive offline play to finally come to fruition. Players such as Bill "tombrady" Menoutis, Matt "shock" Luongo, and Joe "REO" Grosso made considerable strides in their efforts to make *Mortal Kombat* mainstream again. High-level tournament play for *Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3* and *Mortal Kombat Trilogy* has been making its way from the MKK Team in Venezuela. Combining *MK vs. DC* with *Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3* and *Mortal Kombat II* tournaments (all still popular in the northeast part of the United States) in the past couple of years have completely revitalized the tournament scene. With these trailblazing tournaments for the twenty-first century, it is likely we will all finally see *Mortal Kombat* get the royal treatment it deserves with two huge tournaments set in 2011!

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BASIC INFO & TERMINOLOGY

Button Layout/Controller Key

Mortal Kombat utilizes two different standard button-face layouts. The first is a standard controller layout with the attack buttons in the same positions on the PS3 and Xbox 360 controllers. The second button layout brings back the original arcade *Mortal Kombat* "X" style, with the Block button in the middle and the Tag button where the Run button was introduced in *Mortal Kombat 3* and *Mortal Kombat 4*. Each attack button for each character will be thoroughly detailed in each character's specific strategy section.

The basic methods of attack will require you to utilize all of the following:

Toward (tap the control pad or joystick toward your opponent)

Away (tap the control pad or joystick away from your opponent)

Down (tap the control pad or joystick down)

Up (tap the control pad or joystick up)

For easy reference, all of the combos and moves with motions or taps will be referred to using this key:

Attacks

Attack Name	Xbox 360	PS3
Attack 1 (Front Punch)	X	■
Attack 2 (Back Punch)	Y	▲
Attack 3 (Front Kick)	A	×
Attack 4 (Back Kick)	B	●

Basic Attacks

Basic Attacks

Attack Name	Xbox 360	PS3
Block	RT	R2
Throw	A and X or RB	■ + ● or R1
Flip Stance	LB or A + B	× + ● or L2

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Grounded/Quick Recovery Attacks

Pressing any attack button or any direction on the control pad or joystick when your character hits the ground leads to a Quick Recovery.

Not pressing any attack button or any direction on the control pad or joystick when grounded or knocked down leads to a Normal Recovery.

Holding the Block button leads to a Delayed Recovery.

Performing certain special moves on the control pad or joystick when you are grounded will allow you to perform a Recovery Attack. Each one of these attacks is invincible for the first eight frames of animation, and your opponent will be hit by them if they are attacking you. Special moves that can be used as Recovery attacks are detailed in the "Character Strategies" section for each character.

Note

In many instances, Recovery can also be referred to as "Wake-Up." So a Recovery Attack may, at times, be referred to as a Wake-Up Attack.

Air Attacks

Combo Starter: Attack 1 or Attack 2

Pop-Up Attacks: Jump-up Neutral Attack 1 or Jump-up Neutral Attack 2

Standard Jump Kick: Jumping Attack 3 or Attack 4 (can be done very late, hitting your opponent's toe!)

Stationary Jump Kick: Jump Straight Up + Attack 3 or 4

These attacks are performed while you're attacking an airborne opponent. They can do any one of the following: knock an opponent down, begin a Chain Combo, or begin a juggle combo.

Super Meter

Located at the bottom of the screen under your characters, Super Meters are split into three sections and increase by doing the following: performing a special move, getting hit by any move (including regular moves), and having your opponent block your attacks (any moves). The Super Meter allows you to perform enhanced moves (1 bar), Breakers (2 bars), and X-Ray Attacks (3 bars).

Managing your Super Meter involves a lot of understanding your opponent's tendencies, knowing where you are healthwise during the match, and understanding attack setups. Some players use their meter quickly while others save for Breakers (defense against players that combo often) and X-Ray Attacks (huge damage payoff). The ability to read your opponent is necessary in order to properly manage your Super Meter.

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by Curtiz

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Tag Attacks

Tag Attack: Down, Toward + Tag (uses one bar of Super Meter)

Tag Assist: Down, Back + Tag

Tag Out: Pressing the Tag button

Tag Attacks allow your partner to join in the matchup and perform the following possible moves: set up an attack that can be followed up in a combo, throw a projectile, or execute a special move designated in Tag Mode for your partner character only. Your tag partner can not be dealt damage if he/she is hit during their attempted offensive attack.

Enhanced Moves

In order to perform an enhanced move, press the Block button while performing any special move in the game. This allows you to do a more powerful version of special moves that require one bar of your Super Meter in order to use. Similar to EX Moves in the *Street Fighter* series, enhanced moves change the aspects of the special move (such as one projectile becoming two); in some cases, they change the way the move's properties work (e.g., Jade's Shadow Flash becomes invincible to all hits).

X-Ray Attacks

Pressing Attack 3 + Attack 4 + Block simultaneously or pressing LT + RT (Xbox 360) or L2 + R2 simultaneously (PS3) will allow you to perform an X-Ray Attack if three bars of your Super Meter are filled (to perform this on a joystick for any system, press Attack 3 + Block + Attack 4 simultaneously). X-Ray Attacks can be done in combos with some characters, and you can juggle your opponent after X-Ray Attacks with some characters.

X-Ray Attacks are the most powerful attacks in the game and can significantly change the course of a fight. Each one has armor, and for the first two frames you are completely invulnerable to damage. The defensive shield for the armor the X-Ray Attack has is capable of withstanding up to three attempted hits by an opponent at once while the X-Ray Attack is performed. In essence, an X-Ray Attack will go through any of the first three attacks an opponent throws, but the person performing the X-Ray Attack can still take damage from these attacks. If you are down to no life and you attempt to perform an X-Ray Attack, the first attempted attack by an opponent will knock you out, thus ending the round. That is the only time an X-Ray Attack will falter to an attack other than being hit by another X-Ray or blocking (depending on the character).

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General Strategies

High Attacks

High attacks are a basic level of attack that hits an opponent who is standing and not blocking. These attacks will not hit low, which means they are easily avoided by ducking, blocking while crouched, or blocking while standing. High attacks are generally the first hit for a chain combo string or as part of a midscreen or corner juggle. It is important to know that just because an attack "looks" like it hits high does not necessarily mean it does. Check the character moves lists in Chapter 4 for more information on specific attacks if you are uncertain about an attack.

Medium Attacks

Probably the most important move in the game, medium attacks require your opponent to block standing up because they hit ducked opponents even when they are in the blockstun animation. Medium Attacks are deceptive because some of them look like they hit low, causing you to think that the natural state for your opponent to block would be in the low position. They are not formidable attacks on their own but are extremely deadly when used in chain combos that have an automatic medium attack as part of the chain combo; this causes you to block high in the middle of a combo if you start your blocking animation in the low position. It is very difficult to react to a medium attack in the middle of block strings, hence their importance in breaking your opponent's block.

Low Attacks

These moves require you to block in a crouched position. Low attacks are offensive attacks that knock you down, such as a sweep, or a nonadvancing attack that slightly stuns your opponent. Characters with sweep attacks have a better chance at a high/low mix-up game, which can cause your opponent to block the wrong way just once, leaving them extremely vulnerable to being knocked down, comboed, or thrown. Low attacks are best utilized after a high attack or as a starting point to a chain combo because your opponent will not be expecting them as much.

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Overhead Attacks

Each character has a specific number of limited overhead attacks with varying speed that cause a ducking opponent who is blocking to be hit while still in the block. Based on the move's properties, some overhead attacks will knock the opponent up, acting as a pop-up attack and an overhead attack. A good player will learn how to trick the opponent *after* performing an overhead attack. Usually players think they need to block standing up and away after being hit with the first overhead attack, which gives you the opportunity to perform a low attack, sweep, or grab. It's also important to note that not every character has a standardized overhead attack, but they will all have medium attacks that can also act as overheads or even pop-ups.

Pop-Up Attacks

Pop-up attacks give you the opportunity to juggle your opponent for multiple hits and large amounts of damage if your execution skills are on point. Most pop-ups can be followed up with juggle attacks from various special moves and with timed punches performed by pressing standing Attack 1 or Attack 2. Besides each character's specific moves that launch the opponent into the air, you can also pop the opponent up with any character by jumping straight up and pressing Attack 1 or Attack 2.

Uppercuts

Uppercuts are a general anti-air attack used to stop an opponent from jumping at you. These have been a staple of the *Mortal Kombat* series since the original release back in 1992 and continue to play an integral role during gameplay today. Each character can perform an Uppercut by pressing Down + 2. Certain characters have faster start-ups on their uppercuts while others have much slower start-ups which affect the timing of a counterattack against a jumping opponent. Listed below you will find the characters associated by their specific uppercut type:

Uppercut Speed

Fastest: Sonya, Noob, Kratos

Fast: Sektor, Jax, Cage, Liu Kang, Nightwolf, Kung Lao, Stryker, Quan-Chi

Average: Scorpion, Sub-Zero, Shang Tsung, Kano, Reptile, Ermac, Kabal, Cyrax, Sheeva, Kitana, Cyber Sub-Zero

Slow: Sindel, Baraka

Slowest: Mileena, Raiden, Jade, Smoke

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Combo Starter

By jumping in with Attack 1 or 2, you can begin most chain combos with this additional hit. It is definitely the best of the jump-in attacks in the game and is the single most aggressive tactic that leaves your opponent on lockdown, causing them to guess and opening up a plethora of options for block-stun and chain combos. Usually it is *the* basis for attack: jumping in at opportune moments away from the arc area of possible uppercuts or defensive jumping attacks.

Chain Combos

Standard chain combos are multihit attacks that each character can do by performing a sequence of predetermined button inputs. For example, one of Jax's chain combos is done by pressing Attacks 1, 2, and 3 in succession. If you are having trouble with the timing of the combo, you can always hold down the button of the last attack immediately after pressing the button for the second attack. The correct way of doing this would be to press Attacks 1, 2, then hold down the button for Attack 3, or you can just press the buttons as fast as possible and the game will automatically memorize them and perform the correct attacks (including those linked to special moves). The key to maximizing chain combos is to find the ones that are most suitable for your character. When considering chain combos, use the three keys below:

1. Combos that are fast and have excellent recovery time.
2. Combos that start as high attacks and have medium attacks or end as low attacks.
3. Combos that start as low attacks and confuse your opponent into blocking incorrectly. As a bonus, you can also perform special moves that will count as combos after the second hit in a chain combo, but they will not count after the third hit.

Special Move Cancels

Special move cancels are similar to two-in-ones from numerous other fighting games. The idea is that after most attacks, you can cancel that move if you quickly input the motion for a special move afterward. For example, you can press crouching Attack 4, then quickly do the motion for Jade's Shadow Kick (Down, Toward, + Attack 4). This also works for moves that don't necessarily hit the character as a combo, but it creates a very high rate of confusion. With Raiden, try performing random Lightning after a high attack. If you are having problems performing the actual motion for special moves, you can tap Down and then Toward, or Down and then Away instead of actually performing the motion and pressing the Attack button (basically tapping the control pad as ↙ or ↘ and pressing whatever Attack button the special move is assigned to. This allows certain combos to be executed a bit easier.

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Corner

If you are on offense, the best place to lead your opponent is into the corner. The highest level of damage you can achieve on someone would be near the corner. You can juggle your opponent a finite amount of times, depending on the moves performed (usually limited to six additional hits after a jump-in unless you start a combo outside the corner). If you are on defense, it is highly recommended to get away from the corner as much as possible. Many characters can trap you in the corner if you have not practiced what to do in certain situations, especially if you are being outspaced and outdistanced around sweep range.

Breakers

Breakers can be used to stop your opponent from attacking you, allowing you to either go on offense or just get out of any sticky situation. Some characters can also perform special moves after a successful Breaker. These can be performed only if you are getting hit during a chain combo—not while you are blocking. You can perform a Breaker when you have two bars in your Super Meter filled. A lightning bolt in your Super Meter will be lit, denoting this. To perform a Breaker, hold Block and press or hold Towards on the control pad or joystick.

Throws

By pressing RB (Xbox 360) or R1 (PS3), you can throw your opponent and toss them to the ground. Your opponent can break throws by pressing Attack 1 or Attack 3 as soon as the characters are locked in a throwing animation with each other. You can also perform a Back Throw by holding Back on your controller or joystick while throwing, and you can perform a Forward Throw by holding Toward on your controller or joystick. It is important to note that characters who are ducking can avoid throws altogether as long as they are not blocking; however, they risk being hit by medium and low attacks. Only if you are holding Block while ducking are you able to be thrown.

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Dash Canceling and Block Canceling

Dash canceling (or buffering) is necessary in order to perform many of the complex combos required for high-level gameplay. To perform a dash cancel, input Toward, Toward after performing any basic move. For example, if you press Attack 3 with any character and press Toward, Toward while the animation for Attack 3 is hitting your opponent, you will automatically dash at your opponent following the Attack 3. You can do this with any move, but it is extremely effective and timing based when performing complex juggle combos in the middle of the screen. (Attack 1, Dash Cancel, Attack 1, etc.).

Block canceling is performed by pressing Toward, then Block in a rhythmic fashion. This allows you to cover ground slightly quicker and lets you cancel into block-stun if you are being attacked. This works best if you want to cover a shorter distance than your normal dash allows. In some instances, you can also block cancel and immediately dash into a crouching position to further your offensive and defensive mind games.

Juggles and Air Combat

The staple of the *Mortal Kombat* series, juggling your opponent out of the air is a crucial gameplay component at high levels that can make or break a match. Standard juggles have always been performed by pressing a standing 1, then going into a special move. In this game, you have the freedom to extend your combos with the following possible juggle setups:

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Standing 1, special move

Standing 1, dash toward opponent, Standing 1 (or Standing 1,1) special move

Crouching 1, dash toward opponent, special move

Uppercut (you must uppercut your opponent at the peak of their jump), Standing 1 (or Crouching 1, or Dash Crouching 1), special move

Jump in with a late Attack 3 or 4, special move

Crouching 3, special move

Specific chain combos; Standing 1 or dashing toward your opponent; then Standing 1 or Standing 1, 1; special move.

A lot of these moves are also character-dependent, but the possibilities are very high for longer juggle combos with these types of setups. For example, it is possible to get three Gun Shots from Stryker in a single combo, with a little bonus for *Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3* veterans afterward!

Block Damage and Damage Scaling

Block damage is a very important part of the game that favors the aggressive player. When any basic or special move hits an opponent and they are pressing Block, they will incur block damage. This does not scale down and is specific to whether it is an enhanced move, a special move, or a basic move.

Standard damage inflicted on an opponent scales down if you repeat the same sequence (chain combo or repeated special move) over and over again and are successful in striking your opponent. The damage resets back to Normal immediately if you change your chain combo or special moves. Remember, this only works if your opponent is getting hit—not when they are blocking. Damage inflicted from a blocking attack will remain the same.

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Tag Combos, Fast Tags, and Tag Specials

During Tag mode only, pressing LB (Xbox 360) or L2 (PS3) will allow you to tag in an opponent in 2 vs. 2 combat. Pressing Down, Toward + Tag allows you to perform a tag attack that brings in your partner, who will then perform a special move and become your controlled character. Pressing Down, Back + Tag allows you to perform a tag assist, which calls your teammate in; they will again perform a special move but will not stay in the game more than the time it took for your tag partner to perform their specific denoted tag assist. In order to perform a tag assist, you must have one bar available on your Super Meter. (Each character has a specific tag assist that is listed in each character's moves list.)

Tag assists are extremely useful in the sense that unlike the *Marvel vs. Capcom* series, your partner does not take any damage if hit when they are coming in during the actual assist. Your opponent can knock them out of the screen before they actually perform the assist, but that is the limit to the negative aspects of calling out an assist (unless, of course, you do not have one bar on your Super Meter to use). The damage they inflict and the combo possibilities with two characters stemming from an attempted assist is too useful to ignore; it is highly recommended to use this whenever you want to cross up an opponent or force them to block high or low, creating even crazier combo opportunities.

Each character has specific Fast Tag combos that are limited to two to three initial hits. By pressing the Tag button at the end of each assigned combo, your partner will safely "tag" in, and they will perform the last hit of the combo when they enter the arena. Standard tag combos are similar to chain combos and are character-specific. If you are just starting to play Tag mode, familiarize yourself with tag combos in order to take full advantage of the gameplay mechanics *Mortal Kombat* has to offer.

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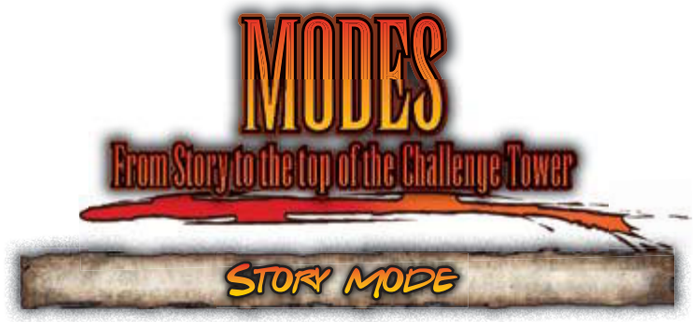

To unlock Cyber Sub-Zero and Quan Chi, you will need to complete Story mode's 16 chapters. (Finishing Chapter 12 unlocks Cyber Sub-Zero and completing Chapter 16 unlocks Quan Chi.) Each chapter allows you to use a different character, and there are sections of Story mode that follow the timelines for the original *Mortal Kombat*, *Mortal Kombat II*, and *Mortal Kombat 3*, with a hint of what is to come at the end.

Most of Story mode is pretty straightforward, but there will be a few instances where you will have to fight as yourself against multiple characters. Conserve your energy and remember, fighting against a computer opponent is very different from fighting against a human. Repetition always works better against artificial intelligence, so keep that in mind!

Story Mode Chapters

***Mortal Kombat* timeline**	***Mortal Kombat II* timeline**	***Mortal Kombat 3* timeline**
Chapter 1: Johnny Cage	Chapter 6: Jax	Chapter 13: Stryker
Chapter 2: Sonya	Chapter 7: Smoke	Chapter 14: Kabal
Chapter 3: Scorpion	Chapter 8: Sub-Zero	Chapter 15: Cyber Sub-Zero
Chapter 4: Cyrax	Chapter 9: Kitana	Chapter 16: Nightwolf
Chapter 5: Liu Kang	Chapter 10: Jade	Chapter 17: Raiden
	Chapter 11: Kung Lao	
	Chapter 12: Liu Kang	

Arena Layout and Combat

In Practice mode or any multiplayer mode (Tag or standard 1 vs 1), if you press Ⓨ (Xbox 360) or ▲ (PlayStation 3) at the player select screen, you can select your fighting arena for battle. Pressing the Start button at this point allows you to select the classic arcade music from *Mortal Kombat*, *Mortal Kombat II*, and *Mortal Kombat 3* for that particular stage.

Arenas with Stage Fatalities

The Dead Pool

Hell

The Living Forest

The Pit

The Pit (Day)

The Street

Subway

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Stages without Arena Fatalities

Armory

The Bell Tower

Challenge Tower

The Courtyard

The Courtyard (Night)

Desert

Evil Monastery

The Flesh Pits

Goro's Lair

The Graveyard

Kahn's Coliseum

The Pit (Bottom)

Rooftop (Dawn)

Rooftop (Day)

Rooftop (Dusk)

Shao Kahn's Throne Room

Soul Chamber

Shang Tsung's Gardens

Shang Tsung's Gardens (Night)

Shang Tsung's Throne Room

The Temple

Wastelands

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Challenge Tower

There are 300 challenges in the Challenge Tower. Successfully finishing each one rewards you with koins for the Krypt, located in the Extras menu. These unlock finishing moves, artwork, and other exclusive Kontent that is sure to surprise even the most hardcore *Mortal Kombat* fanatics!

When going through the Challenge Tower, the majority of the challenges are self-explanatory, but there are a few that will keep you on your toes! We've broken down the most difficult challenges in order to give you some tips and tricks to make your way to the top! If you find a challenge too difficult, you can bypass it with accumulated koins if you go into the Details menu before the specified challenge. Completing Challenge Tower will take around six to seven hours.

Challenge 9

Don't use your Ground Pound until you have killed about eight Tarkatans. Save up your Ground Pound to finish off the ones at the end of the screen, and spam your Wave Punch against the larger Tarkatan making his way toward you. It takes multiple hits to finish him off, and you need to make sure the screen is cleared to get good shots at him.

Challenge 29

Scorpion takes damage only when in the light coming from the ceiling. Simply crouch down with Nightwolf and do an uppercut when Scorpion gets close. The worst that will happen is that he might hit you with an unblockable Hell Fire, but the trade-off is worth it, as Scorpion always seems to walk into uppercuts if you are simply ducking and not blocking.

Challenge 11

A close Ground Pound followed by a jump kick into Air Grab will start the fury on Reptile, but you need to stay on him. A jump-in Combo Starter to a simple uppercut takes off a good amount of damage and allows you to keep pace with Reptile, who will turn invisible shortly afterward. Continue this pattern once you get a close Ground Pound and you should be fine.

Challenge 47

With only 60 seconds to defeat a very motivated and angry team of Sonya and Jax, your best bet is to use an Elbow Dash to knock either one of them down; then perform a Slow Force Ball (which neither of them will block) and an uppercut. You can continually perform variations of this pattern and should not have any problem defeating Jax and Sonya doing this. If you try and perform normal combos and aggressively pursue them, you will probably lose the match.

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Challenge 57

Use your slide continuously with Sub-Zero to knock the Tarkatan leader to the edge of obliteration and win the challenge!

Challenge 62

As Cyrax, don't attack Kung Lao when he is down because he constantly uses his wake-up Spin. Use a couple of sweeps to get him down, then jump in at decent angles with a combo starter into an uppercut combo, or just use some chain combos up close. Because of the time limit, always remember to dash in after each chain combo to keep up the pressure.

Challenge 77

Defeating Reptile and Ermac is not a problem, but this is your first fight against Goro! Simply jump in with a combo starter and hold up/toward to keep following him and crossing him up with a combo starter into Attack 1, or just a combo starter. You'll be surprised at how easy it is to defeat Goro almost flawlessly!

Challenge 86

Jade's best way to attack using only special moves involves utilizing her Staff Smash, then juggling with her Shadow Kicks.

Challenge 87

Defeating 10 Tarkatan Soldiers is easy if you use a combo starter into an uppercut as one strategy and Jade's double Shadow Kick juggle as another!

Challenge 101

The Tarkatan soldiers that have arms will stay on the ground; the ones without arms will jump at you. This is the way to determine whether to use an air or a ground attack.

Challenge 129

Zombie Jax and Sonya seemingly block everything and uppercut at will. There are angles you can jump in with a combo starter and do an uppercut, and there are also points where you can do Cage's Shadow Kick and Jax and Sonya will block and adapt. However, your best bet is to just move toward your opponent and tap 1, 1, 1.

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Eventually they will stay in block-stun for a short while or get hit. Regardless, you will win the match fairly easily.

Challenge 131

To defeat Zombie Goro, follow the same strategy as that for Challenge 77.

Challenge 161

To defeat Shao Kahn within 30 seconds, jump in with a combo starter and press 1, 1. Repeat this technique, or you can jump in with a combo starter and press Away + 3, 1, 2 to begin a juggle combo that will lead him into the corner for big damage.

Challenge 185

Don't immediately jump at Sheeva with Baraka; she will usually Air Grab you. Get into a position where you can perform a combo starter into Attack 1, Chop Chop. Goro is a little bit trickier, as you have to avoid his wild punches that will occasionally hit you, but with the strategies mentioned earlier on how to defeat Goro, you should not have much of a problem. Against Kintaro, you can always hold up/toward and jump in with a combo starter and press Attack 1; then follow this up with the same repeating pattern and you will be fine. It may take a game or two to get the hang of dealing with one Life Bar and only a little bit of health rejuvenation after each successfully defeated character, but you will!

Challenge 203

Unlike the other boss characters, Kintaro's style is not to attack often; therefore, Jade's golden opportunity comes with constant cross-ups and aggressive chain combos in order to floor the beast.

Challenge 250

In order to avoid getting hit by Shao Kahn's upward shoulder thrust, jump at him right before he is getting up and rush him down with varied three-hit chain combos—Attacks 1, 2, 1 or Attacks 2, 2, 1; both work well.

Challenge 261

Your toughest challenge to date will be fighting an army of Shao Kahns! Simply go to the screen's end and use Stryker's gun. Each successful set of shots will hit Shao Kahn and his attempted spear toss. When you see him throw the hammer, jump straight up and down over it, and repeat shooting the gun, jumping straight up over each hammer, and continuing to shoot when you land. When you defeat each Shao Kahn, watch where the new one appears onscreen, as you will need to jump away from him immediately in order to repeat your pattern.

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Challenge 275

First an army of Shao Kahns, and now an army of Goros awaits? Jump in at various angles with a combo starter into uppercut. When Goro spins away to the screen's end, you can throw a projectile that will hit him. Afterward, get close to Goro once again and repeat your combo starter into uppercut pattern or a combo starter into a chain combo of your choice. Remember that crossing up Goro is the key to his ultimate demise.

Challenge 286

A few well-timed jump kicks and up-close Attack 1s will get you the 10 hits necessary to use your mind control with Quan Chi and defeat Goro!

Challenge 287

In order to complete this challenge, walk toward your opponent (meaning press Away in this special mirrored control mode) and press Up + 2 after blocking Quan Chi's attacks.

Challenge 299

Goro can defeat you in one hit; therefore, you must use Sheeva's Jump Stomp almost exclusively to build up enough Super Meter for her X-Ray Attack. It is the only way to consistently get a perfect on Goro at this stage in the Challenge Tower.

Challenge 300

This challenge is nearly impossible to defeat on the first try; you will need to be perfect in order to stand a chance. Each time you lose, the difficulty level becomes progressively easier. Against Goro and Kintaro, make sure to use the same strategies from earlier challenges. Consider using a character with a quick-stunning 1, 1, 1–type combo, such as Liu Kang or Scorpion. While fighting Mileena, be patient against her and find the right angles to jump in with a combo starter if she allows it. If not, your best bet is to bait her into doing a Teleport Drop, then block and uppercut her. Shao Kahn can be defeated by throwing projectiles at him, blocking his spear, and jumping over his hammer. After all is said and done, you get to unlock a very sexy outfit for a very demented character!

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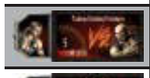
Completing the following tasks in Challenge Tower will open the following bonuses in 1 Player Mode:

Completing Challenge 36 unlocks "Teak" in Test Your Might mode.
Completing Challenge 42 unlocks "A Test Your Sight Challenge" in Test Your Sight mode.
Completing Challenge 48 unlocks "Human Skulls" in Test Your Strike mode.
Completing Challenge 66 unlocks "Oak" in Test Your Might mode.
Completing Challenge 72 unlocks "A Test Your Sight Challenge" in Test Your Sight mode.
Completing Challenge 78 unlocks "Severed Heads" in Test Your Strike mode.
Completing Challenge 96 unlocks "Bamboo" in Test Your Might mode.
Completing Challenge 102 unlocks "A Test Your Sight Challenge" in Test Your Sight mode.
Completing Challenge 108 unlocks "Soul Box" in Test Your Strike mode.
Completing Challenge 126 unlocks "Head" in Test Your Might mode.
Completing Challenge 132 unlocks "A Test Your Sight Challenge" in Test Your Sight mode.
Completing Challenge 138 unlocks "Diamond Bricks" in Test Your Strike mode.
Completing Challenge 156 unlocks "Coal" in Test Your Might mode.
Completing Challenge 162 unlocks "A Test Your Sight Challenge" in Test Your Sight mode.
Completing Challenge 168 unlocks "Gold Bars" in Test Your Strike mode.
Completing Challenge 186 unlocks "Bricks" in Test Your Might mode.
Completing Challenge 192 unlocks "A Test Your Sight Challenge" in Test Your Sight mode.
Completing Challenge 198 unlocks "Marble" in Test Your Might mode.
Completing Challenge 216 unlocks "Silver" in Test Your Might mode.
Completing Challenge 222 unlocks "A Test Your Sight Challenge" in Test Your Sight mode.
Completing Challenge 228 unlocks "Gold" in Test Your Might mode.
Completing Challenge 240 unlocks "Iron" in Test Your Might mode.
Completing Challenge 246 unlocks "A Test Your Sight Challenge" in Test Your Sight mode.
Completing Challenge 252 unlocks "Titanium" in Test Your Might mode.
Completing Challenge 264 unlocks "Amber" in Test Your Might mode.
Completing Challenge 270 unlocks "A Test Your Sight Challenge" in Test Your Sight mode.
Completing Challenge 276 unlocks "Pearl" in Test Your Might mode.
Completing Challenge 288 unlocks "Sapphire" in Test Your Might mode.
Completing Challenge 294 unlocks "Diamond" in Test Your Might mode.
Completing Challenge 300 unlocks Mileena's Flesh Pits Costume.

Challenge Tower Chart

The following chart lists the name of each challenge, the koins earned by completing each challenge, the character(s) you will be using during each challenge, and the opponent(s) you will face.

Challenge Missions

	#	Name of Challenge	Player	Partner (if any)	Opponents
	1	Training: Special Tech (100 koins)	Sonya		Jax
	2	Training: Defense (100 koins)	Sonya		Jax
	3	Training: Offense (200 koins)	Sonya		Jax
	4	Training: X-Ray Training (200 koins)	Sonya	Jax	Baraka
	5	Training: Finishing Techniques (200 koins)	Sonya	Jax	Baraka
	6	Test Your Might (100 koins)	Sonya		

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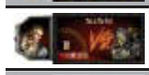
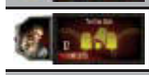
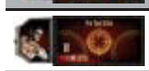
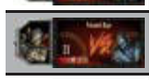
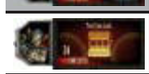
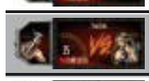
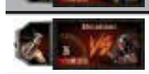
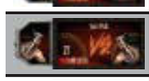
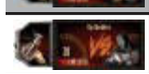
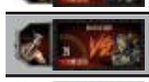
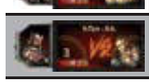
	#	Name of Challenge	Player	Partner (if any)	Opponents
	7	The Hard Way (100 koins)	Jax		Cyborg
	8	In-Terror-Gation (200 koins)	Jax		Baraka
	9	Ambushed! (200 koins)	Jax		Tarkatan
	10	This is the Pits! (200 koins)	Jax		Scorpion
	11	The Invincible Reptile	Jax		Reptile
	12	Test Your Sight (100 koins)	Jax		
	13	Hey Jerk (100 koins)	Johnny Cage		Stunt Man
	14	Round Two (100 koins)	Johnny Cage		Stunt Man
	15	Walking Dead (200 koins)	Johnny Cage		Zombie (Stunt)
	16	SWAT (200 koins)	Johnny Cage	Stryker	Zombie
	17	I'm a Celebrity (200 koins)	Johnny Cage	Director	Jax, Sonya
	18	Test Your Strike (100 koins)	Johnny Cage		
	19	One Hand Tied Behind Your Back (200 koins)	Scorpion		Jax
	20	I Hate Teddies (400 koins)	Scorpion		Mileena
	21	Yin And Yang (400 koins)	Scorpion	Sub-Zero	Raiden, Liu Kang
	22	I've Got Friends in Low Places (400 koins)	Scorpion		Raiden
	23	Poisoned Rage (400 koins)	Scorpion		Sub-Zero
	24	Test Your Luck (100 koins)	Scorpion		
	25	Foul Ball (100 koins)	Nightwolf		Sonya
	26	Reflect and Connect (100 koins)	Nightwolf		Sektor
	27	Spirit Walk (200 koins)	Nightwolf		Nightwolf
	28	Big Shoulders (200 koins)	Nightwolf		Ermac
	29	Ancestral Light (400 koins)	Nightwolf		Scorpion
	30	Shaolin Monk: Act 1 (200 koins)	Liu Kang	Kung Lao	Tarkatan Soldiers
	31	No Throw = No Go (100 koins)	Kano		Jax

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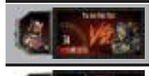
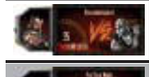
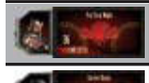
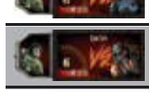
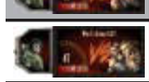
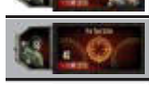
	32	Demon Hunter (200 koins)	Kano		Demons
	33	Pulling My Strings (200 koins)	Kano		Quan Chi
	34	The Hell with This! (400 koins)	Kano		Scorpion
	35	Discombobulated (400 koins)	Kano		Quan Chi
	36	Test Your Might (100 koins)	Kano		
	37	Survive koins (Amount of Koin rewards depends on your performance)	Kabal		Kano
	38	Keep Away from Me! (200 koins)	Kabal		Sonya
	39	Bloody Pulp (200 koins)	Kabal		Sub-Zero
	40	Healing Light (200 koins)	Kabal		Stryker
	41	Assassination Proclamation (400 koins)	Kabal		Nightwolf
	42	Test Your Sight (100 koins)	Kabal		
	43	Stealth (200 koins)	Reptile		Liu Kang
	44	The Best Laid Plan (200 koins)	Reptile		Johnny Cage
	45	1st Responder (200 koins)	Reptile		Stryker
	46	Spin Cycle (200 koins)	Reptile		Kabal
	47	Who Ya Gonna Call? (400 koins)	Reptile		Jax, Sonya
	48	Test Your Strike (100 koins)	Reptile		
	49	Target Practice (100 koins)	Sektor		Cyrax
	50	Sheer Madness (200 koins)	Sektor		Mileena
	51	Rain of Ice (400 koins)	Sektor		Reptile
	52	Psychosis! (400 koins)	Sektor		Cyrax
	53	Frankenstein (800 koins)	Sektor	Cyrax	Kabal, Smoke
	54	Test Your Luck (100 koins)	Sektor		
	55	Your Time to Shine (200 koins)	Sub-Zero		Zombies

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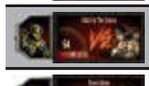
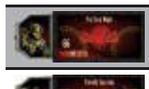
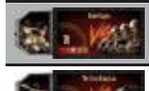
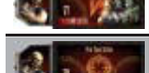
	56	Mess You Up (200 koins)	Sub-Zero		Scorpion
	57	The Burning Man (200 koins)	Sub-Zero		Tarkatan Leader
	58	Out on a Limb (200 koins)	Sub-Zero		Kitana
	59	Resurrection! (800 koins)	Sub-Zero		Sheeva, Goro
	60	Shaolin Monk: Act 2 (400 koins)	Liu Kang	Kung Lao	Kitana, Jade
	61	Carnage Carnival (Amount of Koin rewards depends on your performance)	Cyrax		
	62	What Is Your Major Malfunction (200 koins)	Cyrax		Kung Lao
	63	Fire and Forget…Literally (400 koins)	Cyrax		Sonya
	64	Glitch in the System (800 koins)	Cyrax		Liu Kang
	65	Power Down (800 koins)	Cyrax		Raiden
	66	Test Your Might (100 koins)	Cyrax		
	67	Friendly Sparring (200 koins)	Kung Lao		Liu Kang
	68	Not-So Friendly Sparring (400 koins)	Kung Lao		Liu Kang
	69	Hats Off! (400 koins)	Kung Lao		Raiden
	70	United Again (400 koins)	Kung Lao	Liu Kang	Zombies
	71	The Great Kung Lao (400 koins)	Kung Lao		Nightwolf
	72	Test Your Sight (200 koins)	Kung Lao		
	73	Prove Your Worth (200 koins)	Baraka		Tarkatan Soldiers
	74	But I'm His Favorite! (400 koins)	Baraka		Mileena
	75	Assault on the Palace (400 koins)	Baraka	Mileena	Tarkatan Soldiers
	76	Protect the Fallen (400 koins)	Baraka		Tarkatan Soldiers
	77	Now You Are Just Showing Off… (1,200 koins)	Baraka		Reptile, Ermac, Goro
	78	Test Your Strike (200 koins)	Baraka		
	79	Horse (400 koins)	Kitana		Jade
	80	Projected Anger (400 koins)	Kitana		Mileena

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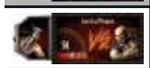
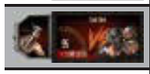
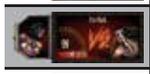
	81	When Brigands Attack! (400 koins)	Kitana		Tarkatan Soldiers
	82	Frost Bitten (400 koins)	Kitana		Sub-Zero
	83	Sibling Rivarly (800 koins)	Kitana	Jade	Mileena
	84	Test Your Luck (100 koins)	Kitana		
	85	Arm-ageddon (200 koins)	Jade		Sindel
	86	It's Not Easy (200 koins)	Jade		Reptile
	87	Portality (400 koins)	Jade		Tarkatan Soldiers
	88	Watch the Face (400 koins)	Jade		Johnny Cage
	89	Specials Are My Thing (400 koins)	Jade		Scorpion, Stryker
	90	Shaolin Monk: Act 3 (400 koins)	Liu Kang	Kung Lao	Baraka, Reptile
	91	Fury of the Ancestors (200 koins)	Nightwolf		Sektor
	92	Storm Front (200 koins)	Nightwolf		Kabal
	93	Clarity (200 koins)	Nightwolf		RuuTuu
	94	Ancestral Weapons (400 koins)	Nightwolf		Baraka
	95	Soul Glow (400 koins)	Nightwolf		Kano, Kabal, Ermac, Scorpion
	96	Test Your Might (200 koins)	Nightwolf		
	97	Kats' Klaws (200 koins)	Mileena		Kitana
	98	Only a Matter of Time (400 koins)	Mileena		Jade
	99	Fire Walls (400 koins)	Mileena		Nightwolf
	100	Meteor Kombat (800 koins)	Mileena		Sindel
	101	Back to Back (800 koins)	Mileena	Baraka	Tarkatan
	102	Test Your Sight (800 koins)	Mileena		
	103	Air Cannon (100 koins)	Smoke		Liu Kang
	104	Barriers (100 koins)	Smoke		Reptile

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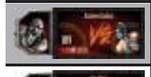
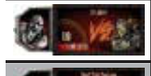
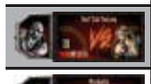
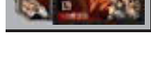
	105	Now You See Me (400 koins)	Smoke		Kung Lao
	106	Tireless Assault (400 koins)	Smoke		Raiden
	107	The Lair of the Beast (400 koins)	Smoke		Sheeva
	108	Test Your Strike (400 koins)	Smoke		
	109	Rainbow Kombat (100 koins)	Quan Chi		Kitana
	110	It's Alive! (400 koins)	Quan Chi		Scorpion
	111	Don't Take Too Long (400 koins)	Quan Chi		Sonya
	112	Win Quickly (400 koins)	Quan Chi		Mileena
	113	Dance Magic Dance (800 koins)	Quan Chi		Shang Tsung
	114	Test Your Luck (200 koins)	Quan Chi		
	115	High Noon (100 koins)	Stryker		Sonya
	116	Kiss Kiss Bang Bang (200 koins)	Stryker	Sonya	Zombies
	117	Power Up! (200 koins)	Stryker		Jax
	118	Make Your Move (400 koins)	Stryker		Reptile
	119	I've Fallen And I Can't Get Up (400 koins)	Stryker		Kano
	120	Shaolin Monk: Act 4 (400 koins)	Liu Kang	Kung Lao	Scorpion, Sub-Zero
	121	SlowMo Kombat (200 koins)	Raiden		Nightwolf
	122	Listen To Your Elders (200 koins)	Raiden		Sub-Zero
	123	Life Swap (200 koins)	Raiden		Johnny Cage
	124	Have to Share (200 koins)	Raiden		Kung Lao
	125	Elder Gods Wrath (400 koins)	Raiden		Quan Chi, Shang Tsung, Ermac
	126	Test Your Might (400 koins)	Raiden		
	127	CUT! (Amount of Koin rewards depends on your performance)	Johnny Cage		Director
	128	Double Trouble (200 koins)	Johnny Cage		Johnny Cage (TWIN)
	129	Old Friends For Dinner (400 koins)	Johnny Cage		Jax, Sonya

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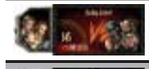
	#	Name of Challenge	Player	Partner (if any)	Opponents
	130	They Have Adapted (400 koins)	Johnny Cage	Stryker	Zombie
	131	Eau De Goro (1,600 koins)	Johnny Cage		Goro
	132	Test Your Sight (400 koins)	Johnny Cage		
	133	Gotcha! (200 koins)	Jax		Kano
	134	New Jax City (400 koins)	Jax		Kabal
	135	Earthquake (400 koins)	Jax		Sheeva
	136	Don't Lose Your Head (800 koins)	Jax	(Sonya)	Sektor
	137	Cyber Wars (800 koins)	Jax		Cyrax, Sektor, Cyber Sub-Zero
	138	Test Your Strike (800 koins)	Jax		
	139	Specials Anyone (200 koins)	Sindel		Ermac
	140	The Queens Guard (200 koins)	Sindel	Mileena	Zombies
	141	Magnetic Floor (400 koins)	Sindel		Baraka
	142	Slow And Painful Death (400 koins)	Sindel		Cyrax
	143	Turn on the Light (800 koins)	Sindel	Nightwolf	Sektor
	144	Test Your Luck (200 koins)	Sindel		
	145	Backup Arrives (200 koins)	Sonya	Jax	Kano, Kabal
	146	Against Super Strength (200 koins)	Sonya		Nightwolf
	147	Scarface (400 koins)	Sonya		Kabal
	148	It's Kombat Time! (1,600 koins)	Sonya		Mileena, Sindel, Kitana, Jade
	149	It's All Led up to This (Amount of Koin rewards depends on your performance)	Sonya		Kano
	150	Gor-owned (400 koins)	Goro		Johnny Cage, Kung Lao, Sonya, Liu Kang, Raiden
	151	Don't Hit a Girl (200 koins)	Noob		Sonya
	152	Together Forever (200 koins)	Noob		Smoke

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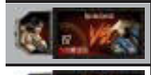
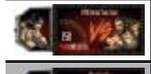
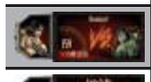
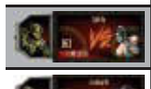
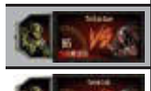
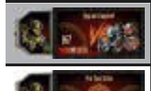
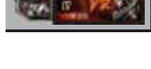
	153	I'll Hit a Lady (400 koins)	Noob		Jade
	154	Home Team Advantage (400 koins)	Noob		Quan Chi
	155	Still a Noob (800 koins)	Noob		Johnny Cage
	156	Test Your Might (400 koins)	Noob		
	157	Sparring Specials (100 koins)	Liu Kang		Raiden
	158	I Will Drink Your Soul (200 koins)	Liu Kang		Shang Tsung
	159	Bloodsport! (400 koins)	Liu Kang		Reptile
	160	Combo to Win (800 koins)	Liu Kang		Sheeva
	161	This Hammer Is My Hammer (1,600 koins)	Liu Kang		Shao Kahn
	162	Test Your Sight (400 koins)	Liu Kang		
	163	Split Up (400 koins)	Cyrax		Kitana
	164	Leaking Oil (400 koins)	Cyrax	Sektor	Noob, Smoke
	165	Drain Game (400 koins)	Cyrax		Sektor
	166	System Crash (800 koins)	Cyrax		Sektor
	167	Upgrade Complete! (1,600 koins)	Cyrax		Kano, Noob, Cyber Sub-Zero
	168	Test Your Strike (1,600 koins)	Cyrax		
	169	Use It or Lose It (400 koins)	Sub-Zero		Noob
	170	Right to Bear Arms (400 koins)	Sub-Zero		Scorpion
	171	The Common Cold (400 koins)	Sub-Zero		Sindel
	172	Retro Reincarnation (400 koins)	Sub-Zero (Alt)		Scorpion (Alt)
	173	Hyper Kombat (800 koins)	Sub-Zero		Mileena
	174	Test Your Luck (200 koins)	Sub-Zero		
	175	Going All Out (200 koins)	Ermac		Smoke
	176	Floor of Flame (400 koins)	Ermac		Kabal
	177	Super Charger (400 koins)	Ermac		Sindel

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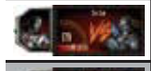
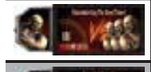
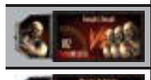
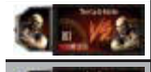
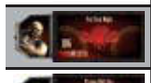
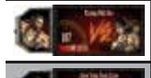
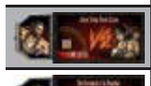
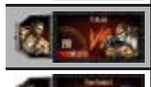
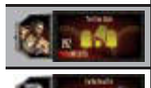
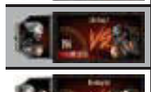
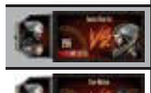
	178	Wait for It (400 koins)	Ermac		Mileena
	179	See Saw (800 koins)	Ermac		Noob, Sub-Zero
	180	Shaolin Monk: Act 5 (800 koins)	Liu Kang	Kung Lao	Shang Tsung, Goro
	181	Dismembering the Good Times! (Amount of Koin rewards depends on your performance)	Baraka		Tarkatan Soldiers
	182	Enough Is Enough! (400 koins)	Baraka		Tarkatan Soldiers
	183	There Can Only Be One (400 koins)	Baraka		Tarkatan General
	184	Rogue Element (800 koins)	Baraka	Mileena	Reptile
	185	Four Arms (1,600 koins)	Baraka		Sheeva, Goro, Kintaro
	186	Test Your Might (400 koins)	Baraka		
	187	Playing with Fire (200 koins)	Shang Tsung		Liu Kang
	188	Arise from Grave (400 koins)	Shang Tsung		Liu Kang
	189	No Seriously, I'm Popular (400 koins)	Shang Tsung		Jade
	190	To Do List (800 koins)	Shang Tsung		Kintaro
	191	Hyper Kombat 2 (800 koins)	Shang Tsung	Kitana	Noob, Smoke
	192	Test Your Sight (800 koins)	Shang Tsung		
	193	I'm Not Dead Yet (200 koins)	Smoke		Noob
	194	Life Swap 2 (400 koins)	Smoke		Kabal
	195	Bleeding Out (400 koins)	Smoke	Quan Chi	Kano, Shang Tsung
	196	Smoke Him Out (800 koins)	Smoke		Sindel
	197	Slow Motion (800 koins)	Smoke		Sub-Zero
	198	Test Your Might (400 koins)	Smoke		
	199	I Feel Sick (400 koins)	Jade		Johnny Cage (Alt)
	200	Out on a Limb 2 (400 koins)	Jade		Goro

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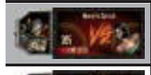
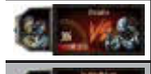
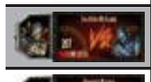
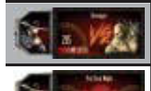
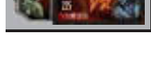
	201	You've Already Won Me Over (800 koins)	Jade		Sindel, Sheeva
	202	Lean My Way (800 koins)	Jade		Mileena
	203	Shao Kahn (800 koins)	Jade		Kintaro
	204	Test Your Luck (800 koins)	Jade		
	205	Money For Specials (Amount of Koin rewards depends on your performance)	Scorpion		Jade
	206	Fire and Ice (200 koins)	Scorpion	Sub-Zero	Cyber Sub-Zero
	207	You Killed My Family (400 koins)	Scorpion		Sub-Zero
	208	Elemental Balance (800 koins)	Scorpion		Sub-Zero
	209	Orange You Glad I Came (800 koins)	Scorpion	Sub-Zero	Shao Kahn
	210	Shaolin Monk: Final Act (800 koins)	Liu Kang	Kung Lao	Shao Kahn, Kintaro
	211	Defend the Temple (200 koins)	Kung Lao	Liu Kang	Zombie
	212	Total Chaos (400 koins)	Kung Lao		Liu Kang
	213	Hats Off to You (800 koins)	Kung Lao		Liu Kang
	214	Wasted (800 koins)	Kung Lao		Mileena, Jade
	215	Revenge! (800 koins)	Kung Lao		Goro
	216	Test Your Might (400 koins)	Kung Lao		
	217	Out on a Limb 3 (200 koins)	Kabal		Sub-Zero
	218	Desire You (200 koins)	Kabal		Sonya
	219	Red Light Green Light (400 koins)	Kabal		Cyrax
	220	Blood Brothers (400 koins)	Kabal	Kano	Quan Chi, Shang Tsung
	221	Lord of the Netherrealm (800 koins)	Kabal		Demon
	222	Test Your Sight (800 koins)	Kabal		
	223	An Offer You Can't Refuse (200 koins)	Reptile		Kitana
	224	Slime to Go (200 koins)	Reptile		Reptile (Alt)
	225	Master of Ice (200 koins)	Reptile		Sub-Zero

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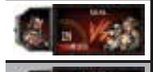
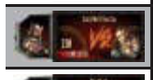
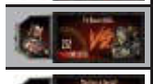
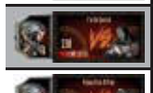
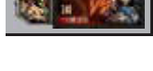
	226	Unit 5…Alive? (400 koins)	Reptile		Cyborg
	227	Cyborg-Absorb (800 koins)	Reptile		Cyrax, Sektor
	228	Test Your Might (800 koins)	Reptile		
	229	Balls Out… (Amount of Koin rewards depends on your performance)	Kano		Kung Lao, Johnny Cage, Stryker, Liu Kang, Sonya
	230	Catch Me If You Can (400 koins)	Kano		Jax
	231	Bloodbath (400 koins)	Kano		Ermac
	232	I'm Baaaccckkkk… (800 koins)	Kano		Scorpion (Flaming)
	233	This Force Is Special? (1,600 koins)	Kano		Cyrax, Sonya, Stryker, Jax
	234	Test Your Luck (800 koins)	Kano		
	235	We're All Vampires? (200 koins)	Sindel		Mileena
	236	Good to Be Queen (200 koins)	Sindel		Raiden, Jade, Kitana
	237	Scream Your Head Off (200 koins)	Sindel (Alt)		Mileena
	238	I'm So Special (400 koins)	Sindel		Ermac
	239	Flying Fists of Fury (800 koins)	Sindel		Kitana
	240	Test Your Might (800 koins)	Sindel		
	241	Big Payday (Amount of Koin rewards depends on your performance)	Kitana		Jade
	242	The Shokan Inquisition (400 koins)	Kitana		Sheeva
	243	The Bitch Is Back (800 koins)	Kitana		Sheeva
	244	A Slow Drip (800 koins)	Kitana	Jade	Quan Chi, Sindel
	245	Up in the Air (1,600 koins)	Kitana		Kitana
	246	Test Your Sight (800 koins)	Kitana		
	247	Deadly Dalliance (400 koins)	Shang Tsung		Quan Chi
	248	Robot Buddies (400 koins)	Shang Tsung	Cyrax	Raiden, Sektor

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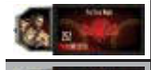
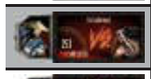
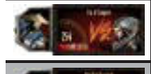
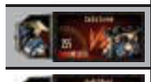
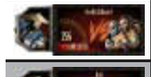
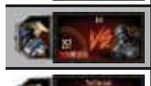
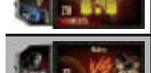
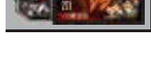
	#	Name of Challenge	Player	Partner (if any)	Opponents
	249	Super Drain (800 koins)	Shang Tsung		Kabal
	250	It's Not My Baby (800 koins)	Shang Tsung		Shao Kahn
	251	Bring It On (1,600 koins)	Shang Tsung		Baraka, Sindel, Shao Kahn
	252	Test Your Might (800 koins)	Shang Tsung		
	253	En-Lightning! (400 koins)	Raiden		Nightwolf
	254	I'm a Vampire (400 koins)	Raiden		Sindel
	255	Earth Is Screwed (400 koins)	Raiden		Kung Lao, Stryker, Liu Kang
	256	Deadly Alliance! (800 koins)	Raiden		Shang Tsung, Quan Chi
	257	Hell (800 koins)	Raiden		Noob
	258	Test Your Luck (800 koins)	Raiden		
	259	Who's There (400 koins)	Noob		Smoke
	260	All Flipped Up (400 koins)	Noob		Kabal
	261	The Healing Exchange (400 koins)	Noob	Ermac	Sonya, Kitana
	262	Brother on Brother (800 koins)	Noob		Sub-Zero
	263	Noob Unbound (1,600 koins)	Noob		Reptile, Scorpion, Baraka
	264	Test Your Might (1,600 koins)	Noob		
	265	Grenade Toss (Amount of Koin rewards depends on your performance)	Stryker		
	266	The Duel (200 koins)	Stryker		Stryker (Alt)
	267	Lock N Load (400 koins)	Stryker		Ermac
	268	Life Swap 3 (800 koins)	Stryker		Sindel
	269	This Is Insane! (3,200 koins)	Stryker		Shao Kahn
	270	Test Your Sight (1,600 koins)	Stryker		
	271	Madness (400 koins)	Ermac		Liu Kang
	272	Time Critical (400 koins)	Ermac		Noob
	273	Fists of Fury (800 koins)	Ermac		Shang Tsung

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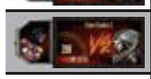
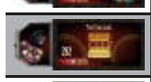
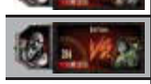
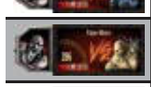
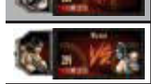
	274	All the Right Moves (800 koins)	Ermac		Liu Kang
	275	Army of What? (3,200 koins)	Ermac		Goro
	276	Test Your Might (1,600 koins)	Ermac		
	277	Low High (400 koins)	Mileena		Kabal
	278	Seek the Warmth (400 koins)	Mileena		Kung Lao
	279	But I'm a Vampire! (400 koins)	Mileena		Smoke
	280	Hyper Kombat 3 (800 koins)	Mileena		Sindel
	281	Rock Your World (1,600 koins)	Mileena		Kitana
	282	Test Your Luck (1,600 koins)			Mileena
	283	Survive This (200 koins)	Quan Chi		Smoke
	284	Hot Potato (400 koins)	Quan Chi		Reptile
	285	Armed and Dangerous (800 koins)	Quan Chi		Stryker
	286	Puppet Master (1,600 koins)	Quan Chi		Goro
	287	Mirror Realm (1,600 koins)	Quan Chi		Quan Chi
	288	Test Your Might (1,600 koins)	Quan Chi		
	289	Who Am I (400 koins)	Random		Kitana
	290	Change Is a Good Thing (400 koins)	Random		Sindel
	291	Hold on a Minute (400 koins)	Random		Cyrax
	292	Do the Robot (800 koins)	Cyber Sub-Zero		Sektor
	293	Knock'em Clock'em Ninja Bot (800 koins)	Cyber Sub-Zero		Sektor
	294	Test Your Might (1,600 koins)	Cyber Sub-Zero		
	295	Four Arms Are Better Than Two (400 koins)	Sheeva		Raiden
	296	Bloodthirst (800 koins)	Sheeva		Sindel

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	297	Lock On! (800 koins)	Sheeva		Sektor
	298	Just a Scratch (800 koins)	Sheeva	Baraka	Quan Chi, Shang Tsung
	299	Boy That Guy Is Strong (3,200 koins)	Sheeva		Goro
	300	End Game (10,000 koins)	Choose		Goro, Kintaro, Mileena (Naked), Shao Kahn

As in previous *Mortal Kombat* games, conceptual art, costumes, and even fatalities are unlocked via this section of the game. You can earn Koins to use in the Krypt if you are signed in to a profile and doing the following:

Test Your Luck – When playing the mode outside of the Challenge Tower, if the "Lucky" reel comes up you will be awarded Koins for winning the match. If you get multiple "Lucky" reels, you will get multiple Koin awards.

Test Your Might, Sight and Strike – All award Koins the first time they are beaten in the Challenge Tower and every time they are beaten if played outside the Challenge Tower. You are awarded only 60 Koins per success outside the Challenge Tower though.

Krypt – Opening certain objects will awards Koins (Secret areas)

Regular Ladder, Tag Ladder (Single Player tag team in Ladder Mode) and Team Ladder (2P Tag Team in Ladder Mode) – Koins are awarded for combos performed; Koin amounts depend on combo damage and difficulty setting. In addition, Koins are also awarded for flawless victories and performing Finishing Moves.

Once an item has been purchased it can be viewed within Nekropolis. Pressing the Ⓨ button on Xbox 360 and ▲ on PlayStation 3 will bring up the map at any time in order for you to view and/or select the overworld area of the Krypt that is divided into five subsections. In certain instances, opening certain graves/death traps will allow you to discover secret "Krypt Kollectibles" that can be claimed in Nekropolis (alternate costumes, etc).

The chart listed below contains a list of some locations with unlockables that you will find while exploring the Krypt. You will need nearly 300,000 Koins in order to open everything in the Krypt. If you are having problems locating a particular grave/death trap you can go to the map screen and head to the desired destination (Deadlands, Bloodmarch, Meadow of Despair, Hollow of Infestation). You will automatically appear in front of the first numerical grave/death trap that you have not unlocked. For example, if you have opened up the first 12 graves in the Deadlands and are wandering around Bloodmarsh, you can head to the Map screen, change the desired area to Deadlands, and you will automatically appear at DL13.

Deadlands: 121 unlockables (1 secret) (DL)

Bloodmarsh: 83 unlockables (1 secret) (BM)

Meadow of Despair: 55 unlockables (1 secret) (MD)

Hollow of Infestation: 40 unlockables (1 secret) (HI)

Nekropolis: User view only

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Deadlands

Loc.	Koins Req.	Reward	Type of Reward	Gameplay Unlockable	Krypt Kollectible
DL-1	0	Headless Kombat 808-808	Kombat Kode		
DL-2	680	Temple Music	BMG		
DL-3	1100	Cage Fatality Sketch	Art		
DL-4	900	Dead Pool Concept	Art		
DL-5	1140	Jade's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Half Mast
DL-6	800	Stryker Primary Costume Concept	Art		
DL-7	1160	Reptile Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Egg of the last Saurian
DL-8	900	Pit (Night) Concept	Art		
DL-9	1020	Wasteland Music	BMG		
DL-10	1200	Blocking Disabled 020 - 020	Kombat Kode		
DL-11	900	Cyber Sub-Zero Concept	Art		
DL-12	800	Jumping Disabled 831 -831	Kombat Kode		
DL-13	1150	Evil Monastery Concept	Art		
DL-14	1000	Kitana Primary Costume Concept	Art		
DL-15	1200	Johnny Cage Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Cage's Sunglasses
DL-16	800	Rooftop (Dawn) Concept	Art		
DL-17	1020	No Blood 900 - 900	Kombat Kode		
DL-18	960	Hell Speed Painting 2	Art		
DL-19	1100	Sonya Fatality Sketch	Art		
DL-20	900	Scorpion Shadow Render	Art		
DL-21	920	Ermac's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Pest Control
DL-22	750	Tormentor Model	Art		
DL-23	1150	Sektor Fatality Sketch	Art		
DL-24	880	Noob Primary Costume Concept	Art		
DL-25	1020	Dark Kombat 022 - 022	Kombat Kode		
DL-26	1100	Armory Music	BMG		
DL-27	1040	Sonya Primary Costume Concept	Art		
DL-28	1200	Sheeva Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Sheeva's Shokan Talisman
DL-29	750	TaiGore Model	Art		
DL-30	1000	Kano Fatality Sketch	Art		
DL-31	880	Raiden Render	Art		
DL-32	1060	Hyper Fighting 091 - 091	Kombat Kode		
DL-33	980	Amory Concept	Art		
DL-34	900	Baraka Alternate Damage Concept	Art		
DL-35	1200	Scorpion Fatality Sketch	Art		
DL-36	1160	Mileena Reveal Render	Art		
DL-37	1040	Kaba's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	It Takes Guts
DL-38	900	Courtyard (Night) Concept	Art		
DL-39	1000	Jax Primary Costume Concept	Art		
DL-40	1080	Baraka Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Baraka's Blades
DL-41	880	Sindel Render	Art		
DL-42	1140	Flesh Pits Concept	Art		
DL-43	1100	Health Recovery 012 - 012	Kombat Kode		
DL-44	800	Scorpion Reveal Render	Art		
DL-45	1060	Dead Pool Victim Concepts	Art		
DL-46	950	Ermac Primary Costume Concept	Art		
DL-47	1100	Sektor Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Sektor's Rocket
DL-48	980	Courtyard (Night) Music	BMG		
DL-49	1020	Courtyard Speed Painting 2	Art		
DL-50	1020	Kombos Disabled 931 - 931	Kombat Kode		

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Loc.	Koins Req.	Reward	Type of Reward	Gameplay Unlockable	Krypt Kollectible
DL-51	920	Scorpion Primary Costume Concept	Art		
DL-52	1000	Kano Primary Costume Concept	Art		
DL-53	1100	Hell Fatality Sketch	Art		
DL-54	860	Shao Kahn's Throne Room Concept	Art		
DL-55	1060	DeadPool Speed Painting 1	Art		
DL-56	800	Stryker Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Stryker's Baton and Pistol
DL-57	880	Desert Speed Painting 2	Art		
DL-58	1080	Rooftop (Dusk) Music	BMG		
DL-59	1100	Armory Speed Painting 2	Art		
DL-60	820	Graveyard Speed Painting 1	Art		
DL-61	900	Desert Music	BMG		
DL-62	1020	Sindel Primary Costume Concept	Art		
DL-63	1500	Quan Chi Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Quan Chi's Amulet
DL-64	1180	Kabal Fatality Sketch	Art		
DL-65	900	Shao Kahn Render	Art		
DL-66	820	DeadPool Speed Painting 2	Art		
DL-67	940	Pit (Day) Concept	Art		
DL-68	820	Koliseum Speed Painting 2	Art		
DL-69	1200	Kitana Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Kitana's Fans
DL-70	1000	Kabal Primary Costume Concept	Art		
DL-71	740	Graveyard Music	BMG		
DL-72	1140	Desert Speed Painting 1	Art		
DL-73	1160	Disable Foreground Objects 001 - 001	Kombat Kode		
DL-74	1200	Sub-Zero Render	Art		
DL-75	800	Flesh Pits Speed Painting 1	Art		
DL-76	970	Kabal Fatality Sketch	Art		
DL-77	1100	Goro's Lair Speed Painting 1	Art		
DL-78	1120	Jade Render	Art		
DL-79	1300	Johnny Cage's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	And The Winner Is…
DL-80	1200	Retro Sub-Zero Render	Art		
DL-81	1120	Flesh Pits Speed Painting 2	Art		
DL-82	1000	Sonya Alternate Damage Concept	Art		
DL-83	1080	Power Bars Disabled 404 - 404	Kombat Kode		
DL-84	820	Shao Kahn Concept	Art		
DL-85	740	Soul Chamber Music	BMG		
DL-86	1140	Sheeva Primary Damage Concept	Art		
DL-87	1180	Mileena Primary Costume Concept	Art		
DL-88	1200	Kabal Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Kabal's Mask
DL-89	1060	Noob Primary Damage Concept	Art		
DL-90	1140	Courtyard (Day) Concept	Art		
DL-91	1060	Smoke Primary Costume Concept	Art		
DL-92	1040	Jax's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Three Points!
DL-93	900	Ermac Alternate Damage Concept	Art		
DL-94	640	Shao Kahn's Throne Room Music	BMG		
DL-95	920	Bell Tower Speed Painting 1	Art		
DL-96	740	Psycho Kombat 707 -707	Kombat Kode		
DL-97	1100	Bell Tower Speed Painting 2	Art		
DL-98	980	Hell Music	BMG		
DL-99	1040	Raiden Alternate Damage Concept	Art		
DL-100	1040	Raiden Primary Costume Concept	Art		
DL-101	920	Shang Tsung Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Shang Tsung's Soul Amulet
DL-102	1020	Rooftop (Dusk) Concept	Art		
DL-103	1100	Kano Alternate Damage Concept	Art		

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DL-104	1000	Cerberus Model	Art		
DL-105	1100	Unlimited Super Meter 466 - 466	Kombat Kode		
DL-106	1100	Sub-Zero Reveal Render	Art		
DL-107	1020	Goro's Lair Concept	Art		
DL-108	980	Shang Tsung's Garden (Night) Concept	Art		
DL-109	840	Sindel Alternate Damage Concept	Art		
DL-110	1060	Nighwolf Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Nightwolf's Tomahawk
DL-111	920	Courtyard Speed Painting 1	Art		
DL-112	840	Graveyard Speed Painting 2	Art		
DL-113	1280	Dream Kombat 222 - 555	Kombat Kode		
DL-114	740	Evil Monastery Music	BMG		
DL-115	980	Mileena Primary Damage Concept	Art		
DL-116	1240	Explosive Kombat 227 -227	Kombat Kode		
DL-117	880	Sheeva Alternate Damage Concept	Art		
DL-118	1000	Retro Scorpion Render	Art		
DL-119	1500	Scorpion Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Scorpion's Spear
DL-120	1020	Cyrax's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Nothing But Net
DL-121	1000	Living Forest Speed Painting 1	Art		
SEC 1	0	Secret Treasure Chest! 5000 Koins!			Located to the right of DL-52. Left of building

Hollow of Infestation

Loc.	Koins Req.	Reward	Type of Reward	Gameplay Unlockable	Krypt Kollectible
HI-1	980	Koliseum Concept	Art		
HI-2	1000	Kung Lao Primary Costume Concept	Art		
HI-3	1080	Koliseum Speed Painting 1	Art		
HI-4	920	Baraka's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Take A Spin
HI-5	760	Living Forest Concept	Art		
HI-6	940	Street Music	BMG		
HI-7	880	Shao Kahn Damage Concept	Art		
HI-8	980	Liu Kang Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Liu Kang's Inner Dragon
HI-9	1100	Cyrax Alternate Damge Concept	Art		
HI-10	900	Rooftop (Day) Concept	Art		
HI-11	1120	Graveyard Concept	Art		
HI-12	1080	Shang Tsung's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Identity Theft
HI-13	820	Shang Tsung Alternate Damge Concept	Art		
HI-14	780	Amory Speed Painting 1	Art		
HI-15	1140	Enhanced Moves Disabled 051 - 150	Art	Kombat Kode	
HI-16	780	Soul Chamber Concept	Art		
HI-17	1000	Jade Primary Costume Concept	Art		
HI-18	1100	Kano's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Eat Your Heart Out
HI-19	960	Goro's Lair Speed Painting 2	Art		
HI-20	920	Sheeva Primary Costume Concept	Art		
HI-21	750	Subway Speed Painting 2	Art		
HI-22	800	Sonya Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Sonya's Dog Tags
HI-23	1060	Shang Tsung's Throne Room Speed Painting 2	Art		
HI-24	1050	Xrays Disabled 242 - 242	Kombat Kode		
HI-25	960	Executioner Concepts	Art		

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HI-26	1020	Bell Tower Music	BMG		
HI-27	820	Shang Tsung's Gardern (Day) Concept	Art		
HI-28	1180	Liu Kang's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	The Beast Within
HI-29	860	Bell Tower Concept	Art		
HI-30	1020	Quan Chi Fatality Sketch	Art		
HI-31	1180	Reptile Alternate Damage Concept	Art		
HI-32	1140	Sektor Primary Damage Concept	Art		
HI-33	1140	Mileena Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Mileena's Sais
HI-34	1120	Shang Tsung Primary Costume Concept	Art		
HI-35	940	Courtyard (Day) Music	BMG		
HI-36	840	Johnny Cage Primary Damage Concept	Art		
HI-37	1200	Quick Uppercut Recovery 303 - 303	Kombat Kode		
HI-38	940	Goro's Lair Music	BMG		
HI-39	1340	Quan Chi's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	On Your Knees
HI-40	880	Sindel Primary Damage Concept	Art		
SEC 2	0	Secret Treasure Chest! 5000 Koins!			Located along wall

Meadow of Despair

Loc.	Koins Req.	Reward	Type of Reward	Gameplay Unlockable	Krypt Kollectible
MD-1	820	Rooftop (Dusk) Speed Painting 1	Art		
MD-2	1260	Nightwolf's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Ascension
MD-3	1060	Living Forest Trees	Art		
MD-4	880	Flesh Pits Music	BMG		
MD-5	840	Nekropolis Concept 6	Art		
MD-6	1200	Cyrax Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Cyrax's Bomb
MD-7	1050	Cyrax Primary Costume Concept	Art		
MD-8	920	Nekropolis Concept 3	Art		
MD-9	1260	Armless Kombat 911 - 911	Kombat Kode		
MD-10	760	Rooftop (Dawn) Speed Painting 1	Art		
MD-11	1280	Sektor's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	The Scarecrow
MD-12	1000	Jax Alternate Damage Concept	Art		
MD-13	1060	Meadow of Despair Concept 2	Art		
MD-14	940	Raiden Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Raiden's Thunder
MD-15	940	Street Speed Painting 1	Art		
MD-16	840	Rooftop (Dawn) Speed Painting 2	Art		
MD-17	900	Breakers Disabled 090 - 090	Kombat Kode		
MD-18	800	Pit Bottom Concept	Art		
MD-19	960	Hallow of Infestation Concept 2	Art		
MD-20	1100	Johnny Cage Primary Costume Concept	Art		
MD-21	1300	Sheeva's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Lend a Hand
MD-22	1080	Desert Concept	Art		
MD-23	1180	Kitana Alternate Damage Concept	Art		
MD-24	1120	Jade Alternate Damage Concept	Art		
MD-25	1200	Kano Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Kano's Knives
MD-26	940	Rooftop (Day) Speed Painting 2	Art		
MD-27	800	Retro Reptile Render	Art		
MD-28	1010	Throwing Disabled 100 - 100	Kombat Kode		
MD-29	840	Shang Tsung's Throne Room Concept B	Art		
MD-30	1100	Shang Tsung's Garden Speed Painting 1	Art		
MD-31	960	Kung Lao's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Razor's Edge

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MD-32	1040	Kitana Primary Damage Concept	Art		
MD-33	1000	Subway Music	BMG		
MD-34	920	Kano Primary Damage Concept	Art		
MD-35	880	Baraka Primary Damage Concept	Art		
MD-36	1200	Jax Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Jax's Flag
MD-37	1000	Goro Render	Art		
MD-38	1060	Early Krypt Entrance Concept 3	Art		
MD-39	1200	Invisible Kombat 770 - 770	Kombat Kode		
MD-40	900	Jax Render	Art		
MD-41	820	Blood Marsh Concept 2	Art		
MD-42	1280	Reptile's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Weight Loss
MD-43	840	Hell Concept	Art		
MD-44	1000	Shao Kahn's Throne Room Speed Painting 2	Art		
MD-45	1280	Vampire Kombat 424 - 424	Kombat Kode		
MD-46	1120	Scorpion Primary Damage Concept	Art		
MD-47	1200	Double Dash 391 - 193	Kombat Kode		
MD-48	940	Kitana Render	Art		
MD-49	1100	Skeletal Statues	Art		
MD-50	1040	Sub-Zero Shadow Render	Art		
MD-51	1140	Sub-Zero's 2nd Fatality	Art	Second Fatality Kode	Spinal Smash
MD-52	920	Pit (Night) Music	BMG		
MD-53	1100	Ermac Render	Art		
MD-54	1000	Sub-Zero Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Grand Master's Amulet
MD-55	880	Scorpion Render	Art		
SEC 4	0	Secret Treasure Chest! 5000 Koins!			Located to right of Nekropolis

Bloodmarsh

Loc.	Koins Req.	Reward	Type of Reward	Gameplay Unlockable	Kypt Kollectible
BM-1	1080	Living Forest Speed Painting 2	Art	—	
BM-2	920	Mileena'a Second Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Mileena
BM-3	800	Shang Tsung's Throne Room Concept A	Art	—	
BM-4	750	Evil Monastery Speed Painting 2	Art	—	
BM-5	1040	Noob Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Noob's Shadow
BM-6	980	Sonya Render	Art	—	
BM-7	900	Noob Alternate Damage Concept	Art	—	
BM-8	1100	Noob's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	As One
BM-9	880	Dragon Concept	Art	—	
BM-10	1120	Retro Ermac Render	Art	—	
BM-11	1100	Rainbow Kombat 234 - 234	Kombat Kode	—	
BM-12	940	Kung Lao Alternate Damage Concept	Art	—	
BM-13	1040	Sektor Primary Costume Concept	Art	—	
BM-14	1220	Raiden's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Transplant
BM-15	900	Shang Tsung Primary Damage Concept	Art	—	
BM-16	940	Shang Tsung's Throne Room Music	BMG	—	
BM-17	750	Temple Speed Painting 2	Art	—	
BM-18	960	Jax Primary Damage Concept	Art	—	
BM-19	1200	Sindel Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Sindel's Crown

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BM-20	1020	Dead Pool Music	BMG	—	
BM-21	1200	Sub-Zero Primary Costume Concept	Art	—	
BM-22	920	Rooftop (Dusk) Speed Painting 2	Art	—	
BM-23	980	Kitana's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Splitting Headache
BM-24	1000	Street Concept	Art		
BM-25	1080	Shao Kahn's Throne Room Speed Painting 1	Art	—	
BM-26	900	Smoke's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Tremor
BM-27	960	Nightwolf Primary Costume Concept	Art	—	
BM-28	900	Soul Chamber Speed Painting 1	Art	—	
BM-29	950	Ermac Primary Damage Concept	Art	—	
BM-30	990	Sans Power 044 - 440	Kombat Kode		
BM-31	860	Liu Kang Primary Costume Concept	Art	—	
BM-32	950	Sonya Primary Damage Concept	Art	—	
BM-33	920	Shang Tsung's Garden Speed Painting 2	Art	—	
BM-34	900	Lui Kang Alternate Damage Concept	Art	—	
BM-35	1300	Sonya's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Kut-Throat
BM-36	960	Soul Chamber Speed Painting 2	Art	—	
BM-37	1100	Mileena Shadow Render	Art	—	
BM-38	1200	Kung Lao Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Kung Lao's Hat
BM-39	1000	Street Speed Painting 2	Art	—	
BM-40	920	Nekropolis Concept 2	Art	—	
BM-41	1140	Silent Kombat 300 -300	Kombat Kode	—	
BM-42	860	Living Forest Music	BMG	—	
BM-43	940	Parasite Victims	Art	—	
BM-44	1300	Sindel's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Mouthful
BM-45	1000	Liu Kang Render	Art	—	
BM-46	940	Deadlands Concept 2	Art	—	
BM-47	1200	Specials Disabled 731 - 731	Kombat Kode	—	
BM-48	1140	Liu Kang Primary Damage Concept	Art	—	
BM-49	940	Meadow of Despair Concept 1	Art	—	
BM-50	1000	Jade Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Jade's Gold Necklace
BM-51	1150	Temple Speed Painting 1	Art	—	
BM-52	860	Jade Primary Damage Concept	Art	—	
BM-53	1150	Evil Monastery Speed Painting 1	Art	—	
BM-54	990	Super Recovery 123 - 123	Kombat Kode	—	
BM-55	880	Nightwolf Alternate Damage Concept	Art	—	
BM-56	850	Wasteland Speed Painting 2	Art	—	
BM-57	900	Stryker's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Have A Blast
BM-58	920	Baraka Primary Costume Concept	Art	—	
BM-59	900	Nekropolis Concept 1	Art	—	
BM-60	1190	Throwing Encouraged 010 - 010	Kombat Kode	—	
BM-61	1150	Temple Concept	Art	—	
BM-62	820	Shang Tsung's Garden (Night) Music	BMG	—	
BM-63	1450	Cyber Sub-Zero's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Brain Freeze
BM-64	1010	Tournament Mode 111 - 111	Kombat Kode	—	
BM-65	750	Subway Speed Painting 1	Art	—	
BM-66	1150	Reptile Fatality Sketch	Art	—	
BM-67	1000	Goro Damgae Concept	Art	—	
BM-68	1200	Ermac Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Ermac's Soul Trap
BM-69	1020	Wasteland Concept	Art	—	
BM-70	940	Meadow of Despair Concept 3	Art	—	

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BM-71	1120	Shang Tsung's Throne Room Speed Painting 1	Art	—	
BM-72	920	Scorpion's 2nd Fatality	Fatality	Second Fatality Kode	Nether-Gate
BM-73	960	Hallow of Infestation Concept 1	Art	—	
BM-74	1080	Scorpion Fatality Sketch	Art	—	
BM-75	960	Cyrax Render	Art	—	
BM-76	860	Reptile Primary Damage Concept	Art	—	
BM-77	1300	Zombie Kombat 666 - 666	Art	—	
BM-78	1150	Subway Concept	Art	—	
BM-79	920	Rooftop (Day) Speed Painting 1	Art	—	
BM-80	840	Koliseum Music	BMG	—	
BM-81	980	Reptile Primary Costme Concept	Art	—	
BM-82	960	Smoke Alternate Costume Concept	Art	Costume Krypt Key	Smoke's Cloud
BM-83	820	Mileena Alternate Damage Concept	Art	—	
SEC 3	0	Secret Treasure Chest! 5000 Koins!			Located along wall

Nekropolis

Nekropolis is a museum that allows you to check all of your unlocked items from the Krypt, including character art, environmental art, arena music playlists, early fatality initial design sketches. You can also see character bios; comprehensive statistics; and milestone achievements for each character, such as victories, finishing moves, successfully landed X-Ray Attacks, pints of blood spilled, and time played with each character.

Standard One-Player Modes or "Fight"

Below are the different Single-One Player Modes you can play.

Ladder mode: Allows you to play old-school *Mortal Kombat* style, Tournament ladder to the top, fighting Shao Kahn at the end.

Tag Ladder: Battle your way through a tag-team tournament using two fighters.

Test Your Luck: Spin the wheels on the slot machine and prepare for many fight rule changes and modifiers.

Test Your Might: Power up your meter and smash through progressively difficult objects.

Test Your Sight: Certain death awaits those without a fast eye and mind.

Test Your Strike: A new take on Test Your Might, where precision outweighs brutal strength.

All of the "test your" challenges in single-player mode are unlocked after you finish them in the Challenge Tower.

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- Liu Kang
- Mileena
- Nightwolf
- Noob
- Quan Chi
- Raiden
- Reptile
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- Sektor
- Shang Tsung
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- Smoke
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MORTAL KOMBAT™

The following pages detail strategies for every character. From basic attacks that may not need a lot of setup explanations to more complex combos (A, B, and C), each character section provides you everything you need to create your own fighting strategy. Read up, take our tools, and practice, but most importantly, use those tools to create your own style.

NOTE

In order to bring you the most accurate strategy possible and keep this guide from becoming outdated, we have purposely left out damage and character frame data information. Each specific move, attack, combo damage, and character frame analysis presented in the game is subject to NetherRealm updating and patching the game with character balancing and move damage updates. When you turn on your game and connect to the PSN Network or Xbox Live, these updates will automatically be downloaded to your console.

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BARAKA

Bio

Baraka is the fiercest of the Tarkatans, vicious nomadic mutants from the wastes of Outworld. Like all Tarkatan males, he joined Shao Kahn's army once he came of age and survived the brutal Ritual of Blood. He gained the rank of Enforcer after single-handedly defeating a rebel faction. His loyalty and strength make him a favorite of the emperor; his retractable blades have slain many of Shao Kahn's most bitter enemies. As a kontestant in the Mortal Kombat tournament, he will ensure his emperor's claim to EarthRealm.

General Strategies

Baraka's attack style is best suited for close attacks and his 2, 2, 1 + 2 juggle setups. The Blade Uppercut is a very effective anti-air, as is the old faithful: Baraka's Chop Chop attack. Baraka has to remain on the offensive warpath due to his lack of long-range "quick" moves. His projectile "Spark" is easy to duck, is easily jumped, and can be baited. Baraka's Blade Charge is very deceptive; it comes out instantaneously and is very hard to react to (pressing Block on sight). Baraka has an excellent wake-up Blade Spin that doubles as an anti-air option and definitely takes advantage of the invulnerability frames allowed by performing a Wake-Up attack. Baraka can go through projectiles (one hit) with his Blade Rush, but it will cost you one bar of Super Meter. The invincibility frames on the Blade Rush on wake-up create the illusion that you must back away from Baraka. You can also use the normal version as a viable attack since your opponent will be unable to duck it.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Baraka	112	X	6	3.5	3	5	4	3	4	4	3.5	3.5	3.5	4	3	5	6	3	5	4	5	2.5	5.5	4.5	3	4	4.5	4.5	5.5

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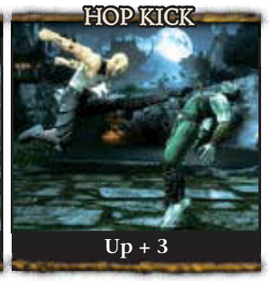
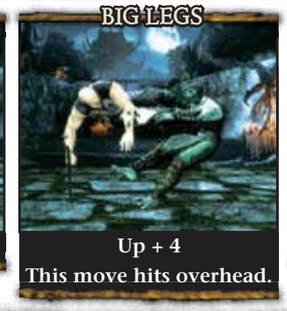
Basic Moves





Chain Combos

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TEARS OF PAIN

2, 2, 2 + 1 The last hit of this chain hits overhead.

TARKATAN PUSH

Away + 2, Toward + 2

HORROR SHOW

Toward + 2, 4

OUTWORLD BASH

Toward + 2, 2

TARKATAN BLOWS

3, Away + 3

OPEN WOUND

Away + 3, 1, Toward + 1

EASY KILL

Away + 3, 2, 2

DOOM KICKS

Toward + 4, 4

Fast Tags (Tag Mode Only)

BLOODY MESS

Away + 3, 1, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

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Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

SKINNED ALIVE

1, 2, Tag

KILLER KUTS

2, 1, Tag

HAVE AT IT

2, 2, Tag

Special Moves

BLADE CHARGE

Down, Toward, 2

This move is a great way to end chain combos and juggles, and it is fast enough to catch your opponent off guard or execute it right before their projectiles come out.

BLADE SPIN

Down, Away, 3

This move is flashy but can get punished badly if blocked. Only use this in the middle of a chain combo.

CHOP CHOP

Away, Away, 1

You can use this as an anti-air and can combo it off of any chain.

SPARK

Down, Away, 2

This projectile has decent speed but has one of the slowest recovery times of any projectile in the game. This move can cost you in clutch but makes for a good combo ender.

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SLICES

Down, Toward, 1
Ending a combo with the Slices adds finesse to any juggle or combo.

ENHANCED MOVES

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

BLADE RUSH

Down, Toward, 2 + Block
This functions the same as the Blade Charge, but it scores for extra damage.

SPARKED

Down, Away, 2 + Block
Same as the normal version but with added damage.

CHOPCHOP SHOP

Away, Away, 1 + Block
This works the same as the Chop Chop but hits an extra two times and causes extra damage.

SPINNER

Down, Away, 3 + Block
This hits two more times than its normal version and deals more damage.

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SLICER

Down, Toward, 1 + Block

This version of the Slices hits one more time and if the opponent is hit with this near the corner, it's possible to squeeze in a Blade Charge to hit them before they land.

Wake-Up Moves

CHOP CHOP

Away, Away, 1

BLADE SPIN

Down, Away, 3

Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

Jump Punch, Away + 3, 1, Blade Charge

COMBO B (5 HITS)

2, 2, Slices

COMBO C (5 HITS)

Neutral Jump Punch, Dash in, 1, 2, 2, Blade Charge

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Expert Combos

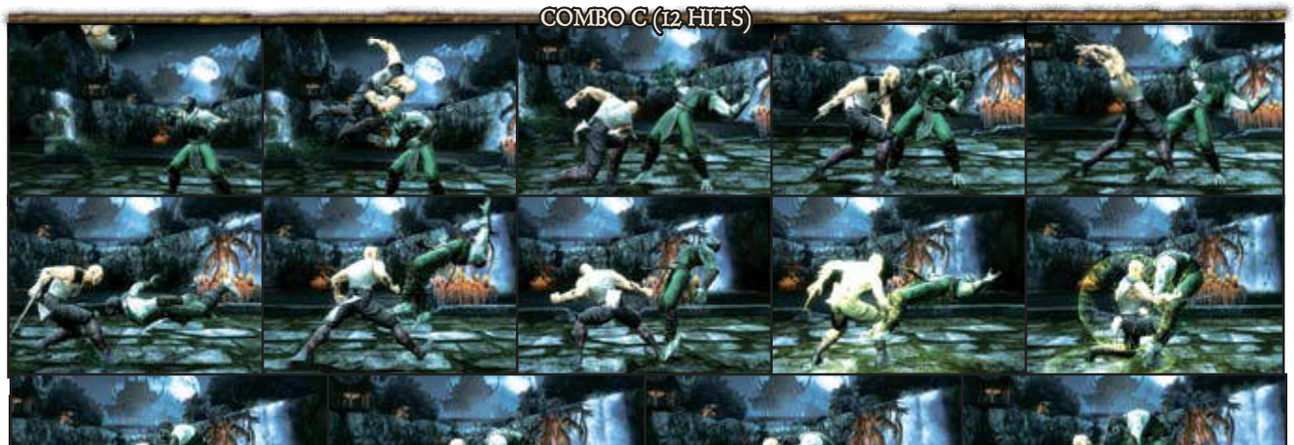
COMBO A (7 HITS)

Jump Punch, 1, 2, Spinner

COMBO B (8 HITS)

2, 2, 1 + 2, Dash in, Away + 3, 2, Blade Rush

COMBO C (12 HITS)



Jump Punch, 2, 2, 1 + 2, Dash in, Away + 3, Chopchop Shop

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

Baraka's X-Ray does good damage, and you can combo it off of any chain. It also travels a pretty good distance and can catch an opponent off guard in a projectile fight from less than full screen distance away. A crafty way to land it is to punish an opponent if they try to jump backward from out of close quarters.

Finishing Moves

Away, Toward, Down, Toward, 1

TAKE A SPIN
Toward, Toward, Down, Down, 3

STAGE FATALITY
Down, Down, Down, Down, 3

Best Matchup

Baraka's best matchup is probably against Cyber Sub-Zero, who has nothing too threatening for Baraka from a distance or up close, besides his Ice Ball and Ice Beam. Baraka can cleanly counter Cyber Sub's Teleport with a well-timed Chop Chop, and Baraka can swiftly counter Cyber Sub's Ice Bombs with a Blade Charge. Baraka can also punish the Slide with any combo he likes when blocked. Baraka still has to be methodical in this matchup, but if both characters are at their most calculated, Baraka should have the edge.

Worst Matchup

Baraka's worst matchup is the sorcerer Shang Tsung. A lot of characters are troubled by Shang's projectiles, but nobody feels the burn more than Baraka. During a firefight, Baraka usually can catch an opponent at least once with the Blade Charge as they are throwing a projectile and gain some momentum from it. However, against Shang Tsung, this is almost impossible. Shang's Close Ground Skull serves as a force field that protects him from Baraka landing a clean shot before he can get the projectile off. Using that as a cornerstone, Shang can have his way with Baraka by using his fireball prowess and build meter during the onslaught. At best, Baraka can only trade hits with Shang's projectiles, and even then it pushes Baraka back far enough to reset both players' positions. Baraka has to thread the needle with perfectly timed jumps to stand a chance in this matchup. This may be the biggest mismatch possible out of all the cast.

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CYBER SUB-ZERO

Bio

An assassin of the Lin Kuei clan, Kuai Liang commands the power of ice and cold. Unlike other members of his clan, he and his older brother, Bi-Han, were abducted as children by the Lin Kuei and trained in the techniques of assassination throughout their lives. Though his codename is Tundra, he has now assumed the mantle of Sub-Zero to honor his brother after Bi-Han's mysterious death. With the help of his fellow Lin Kuei Smoke, Sub-Zero tirelessly hunts the one who killed his brother.

General Strategies

Cyber Sub-Zero plays like a combination of Cyrax and Sub-Zero but does not feel as "scary" to play against as those two characters. While he maintains Sub-Zero's slide and freeze (Ice Ball), his lack of an Ice Clone now requires him to throw out constant Ice Balls at varying distances in order to keep an opponent from getting in. A good low attack into juggle involves a setup from Away + 3, 2, which can be followed up with juggle attacks, a close and medium Ice Bomb vortex, or a simple uppercut. Cyber Sub-Zero can perform some pretty high damage just from a basic Toward + 1, 4 combo that can also be combed after any juggle. Be careful, if you attempt this combo too early (midscreen, while opponent is not blocking), Cyber Sub-Zero has an extremely long delay getting up, leaving him vulnerable for easy counterattacks.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Cyber Sub-Zero	101	4	X	4	2	4	4	3	4	4	3.5	3	3.5	4	2	4.5	5	3	4	4	4.5	2	5	4	3	4	4	4	5

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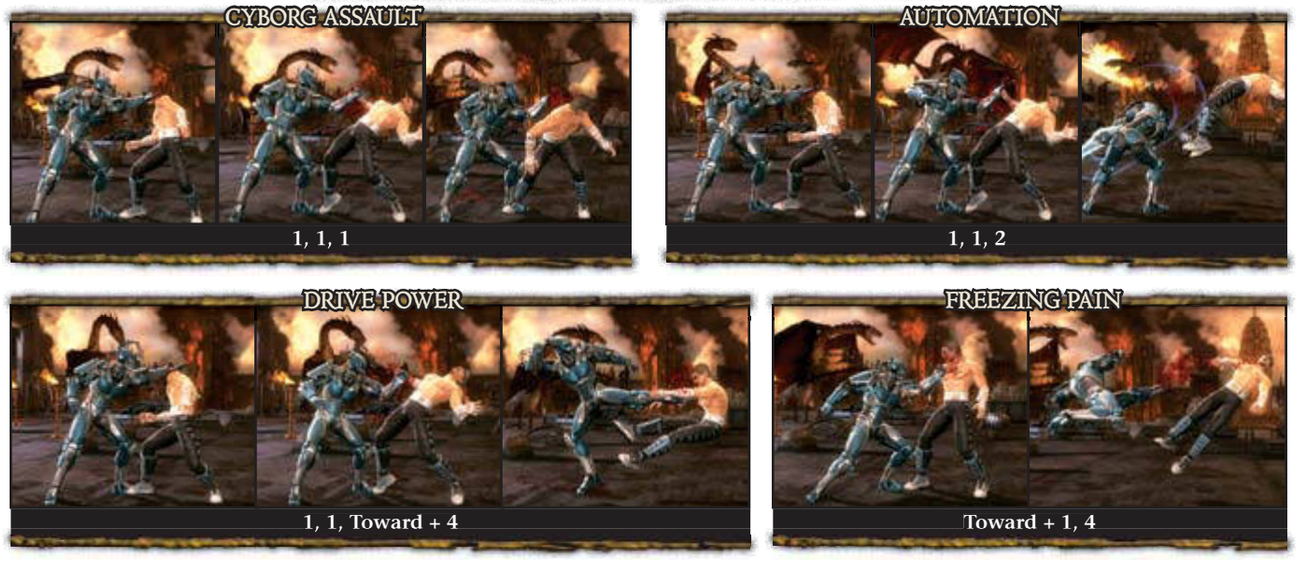

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Toward + 2, 2, 1

Away + 1, 2

Away + 2, 2

Away + 2, 4

3, 4 The second hit of this chain hits overhead.

2, 1, 1 + 2

3, 3, 2

Away + 3, 2, 1

Fast Tags (Tag Mode Only)

3, 4, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

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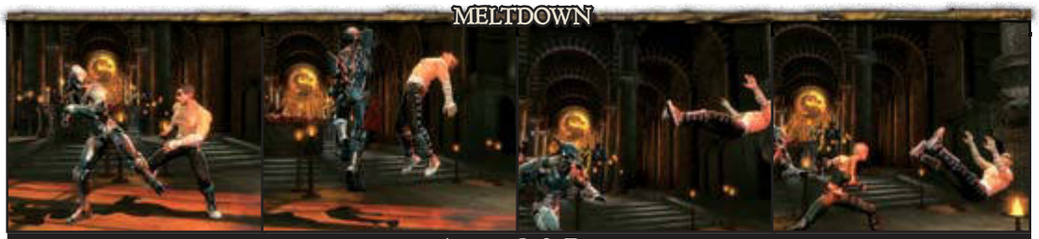
MELTDOWN



Away + 3, 2, Tag

Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

DRY ICE

1, 1, Tag

GLACIER

2, 1, Tag

ICE OVER

Toward + 2, 2, Tag

Special Moves

ICE BOMB (CLOSE)

Away, Away, 3

ICE BOMB (MEDIUM)

Toward, Toward, 3

ICE BOMB (FAR)

Away, Away, Toward, 3

An otherwise cool and gratifying move that is much too easy to see and avoid.

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ICE BALL

Down, Toward 1

This is a below-average speed projectile but you can combo it off of chain combos such as 1, 1 and 2, 1.

SLIDE

Away, Toward, 4

This hits low and can be used as a combo ender. The Slide almost always works in a clutch as well.

ICE PARRY

Down, Away 2

This move parries all high attacks, except projectiles.

TELEPORT

Down, Away, 1 This teleports you behind the opponent.

DIVEKICK (CLOSE)

Down + 3

DIVEKICK (FAR)

Down + 4

This is a quick air attack that causes a stagger reaction when landed.

ENHANCED MOVES

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

ICE BEAM

Down, Toward 1 + Block

This may be Cyber Sub-Zero's best special move. It has good speed and reaches full screen. Perfect to use after popping an opponent up.

CYBER-SLIDE

Away, Toward, 4 + Block

This functions like the regular Slide but with an extra kick added and some extra damage.

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CRYO BOMB (CLOSE)

Away, Away, 3 + Block

CRYO BOMB (MEDIUM)

Toward, Toward, 3 + Block

CRYO BOMB (FAR)

Away, Away, Toward, 3 + Block

The fact that there are three bombs that drop makes it a little harder to get away, but they can still can be escaped with a well-timed jump.

BANGPORT

Down, Away, 1 + Block

This works like the Teleport but the Bangport can strike an opponent up close. It can also be used as a great anti-air.

FROZEN PARRY

Down, Away 2 + Block

This turns enemies into an ice statue if they touch it.

POWERKICK (CLOSE)

Down + 3 + Block

This functions like the Divekick only with a few extra kicks for flash added.

POWERKICK (FAR)

Down + 4 + Block

This functions like the Divekick only with a few extra kicks for flash added.

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Wake-Up Moves

SLIDE

Away, Toward, 4

ICE PARRY

Down, Away 2

Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

Ice Ball, Away + 3, 2, 1

COMBO B (5 HITS)

1, 1, 2, Cyber-Slide

COMBO C (6 HITS)

1, 1, Ice Ball, Dash in, 3, 3, 2

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Expert Combos

COMBO A (8 HITS)

2, 1, 1 + 2, Dash in, Toward + 2, 2, 1, Cyber-Slide

COMBO B (10 HITS)

3, 3, 2, Ice Beam, Jump Punch, Dash in

COMBO C (12 HITS)

Jump Punch, 2, 1, 1 + 2, Jump Punch, Far Divekick, 1, 1, Ice Beam, Jump Kick, Far Powerkick

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

Cyber Sub-Zero has the only X-Ray that is *required* to be performed in the air. The problem is, it lands at such a weird angle that it's a task to set it up with anything but the most basic of juggle combos or a Freeze. However, it can travel full screen, so the possibility of countering someone with an X-Ray in a firefight is always there. The X-Ray does pretty good damage as well.

Finishing Moves

Down, Away, Down, Toward, 2 (one jump distance away from opponent)

BRAIN FREEZE
Down, Down, Away, Down, 1

STAGE FATALITY
Down, Down, Up, Block

Best Matchup

Cyber Sub-Zero's best matchup is probably Noob Saibot. Cyber Sub can close the distance or counter Noob by performing Far Dive Kicks over his Shadow Charges and Shadow Slides. He doesn't necessarily have to counter Noob's Shadows; he just has to build meter and not get hit too much. Later down the stretch, he can land the X-Ray when Noob least expects it. The Ice Beam is fast enough to trade with a Shadow projectile, too, so it's no biggie to take a hit so that you can teleport next to a guy and perform a full combo. Cyber takes this matchup as long as his head is in the game.

Worst Matchup

The worst possible matchup for Cyber Sub-Zero is Raiden. Raiden can almost do whatever he wants in a bout with Cyber Sub-Zero. He can teleport the moment anything resembling a projectile comes out of his chest or hands. He can use the Bolt attack as a free pass to mount his own offense, and he can combo his chains into the Teleport. If Cyber Sub tries to teleport, Raiden can hit him with the Electrocution and juggle him for big damage before he hits the ground. It's just an all-around one-sided affair in favor of the thunder god.

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CYRAX

Bio

A skilled Motswana warrior, Cyrax relies on his natural fighting ability, his chi, to carry out Lin Kuei missions. He is proud to serve, but when the Grand Master initiates a program to convert the clan into cyborgs, Cyrax resists. He is reluctant to lose his humanity, which he believes is more effective than any mechanical augmentation. He has contemplated leaving the clan, fearing that it is no longer an organization of honorable assassins. Cyrax knows, however, that such a decision means death at the hands of his former comrades. No one leaves the Lin Kuei.

General Strategies

Cyrax's ability to keep an opponent out with two or three moves is the basis for most of his high damage setups. Bombs, Nets, and the occasional Reverse Kick and Donkey Kick for players that forget to block low setup a grab afterwards if you press 1 + 3 immediately. Chain Combos from 1, 2, 1, and 1, 2, 3 are excellent and also work well as juggle combos. The occasional Buzzsaw and of course the Uppercut complete Cyrax's repertoire allowing him the capabilities of completely flustering all opponents with a wall of projectiles. If you happen to catch your opponent with a Net anywhere on the screen, immediately Teleport to get close to him and perform a 2, 1, 2 combo or a timed 1, 2, 3, Buzzsaw combo. Constant use of the bombs on screen change the scope of the match and since bombs scoot forward it is important to recognize the duration of time (three seconds) that the bomb will stay on the screen. You can have all three bombs on the screen at once but you will be disabled from throwing bombs while your opponent is stuck in a Net.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Cyrax	125.5	6.5	6	X	4	5.5	6	4	4.5	4.5	4.5	3	4.5	5	3	5	6	3.5	5	4.5	5	3	6	4	3.5	4.5	4.5	5	5

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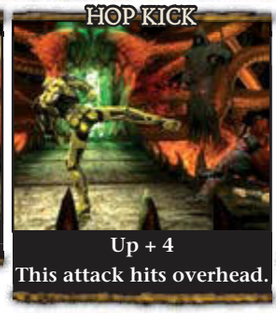
Basic Moves



Chain Combos

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SAW ENOUGH

2, 2, Toward + 1

CYBER BEATDOWN

Away + 1, 2, 1, 2 (must be pressed rapidly)

KOMBAT BOOTS

3, 3, 4

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

AUTOMATION

Away + 2, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

TAG COMBOS (TAG MODE ONLY)

NUMBER CRUNCHER

Away + 1, Tag

HIGH TECH

1, 2, Tag

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SHORT CIRCUIT

2, 1, Tag

SPECIAL MOVES

BOMB (CLOSE)

Away, Away, 4

Use this distance Bomb to scare an opponent away from your immediate area.

BOMB (MEDIUM)

Toward, Toward, 4

Use the medium-distance Bomb after dropping a close Bomb to confuse an opponent's natural tendency to stay just out of range when they see Cyrax with a close Bomb near him.

BOMB (FAR)

Away, Away, Toward, 4

If your opponent is a full screen distance away, throw this Bomb and they have to either jump or advance forward. It works best when you combo off of Cyrax's 1, 2, 1 chain.

NET

Away, Away, 3

You can combo this off of any chain and can be used in a juggle such as after landing a Bomb. It also covers just enough horizontal space to be difficult to jump over.

TELEPORT

Down, Away, 1 (can be done in the air)

The teleport works best when catching an opponent in the Net from a full screen away. This puts you next to the opponent instantly, allowing you to land a full combo at point-blank range instead of throwing a projectile or jumping from afar.

REVERSE KICK

Down, Toward, 3

This move works best if you combo off one of Cyrax's chains. A sneaky way to land it is to perform it immediately after throwing a medium-distance Bomb, catching your opponent while they try to jump away or toward you.

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BUZZSAW

Away, Toward, 2

This gratifying move is extremely punishable if whiffed, so it's best to use this in the middle of a combo or as a combo ender.

ANTI-AIR

Down, Toward, 1 (opponent must be in the air)

As the move title suggests, this move is a great anti-air attack.

RAGDOLL

Down, Toward, 3, Throw (press Block immediately)

Same as Reverse Kick, but deals more damage.

Enhanced Moves

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

STICKY BOMB

Away, Away, 4 + Block

This acts as a slow horizontal projectile, but when landed pops the opponent up to be juggled.

ELECTRO NET

Away, Away, 3 + Block (takes away one bar of Super Meter from an opponent)

Use this move just like you would the normal Net, but only when you don't want an opponent to have enough meter to use a combo breaker (to stop whichever combo you choose to do).

SAW BLADE

Away, Toward, 2 + Block

This version of the Buzzsaw acts as a projectile that is much faster than the Net or the Sticky Bomb. It works great in conjunction with Cyrax's Bombs. When your opponent jumps away from Bombs, use the speed of this move to catch them on the way up or on the way down.

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BANGPORT

Down, Away, 1 + Block (can be done in the air)

This functions like the normal Teleport but will actually hit an opponent at close range. In addition, it leaves the opponent airborne for a split second; attack them if you're fast enough!

RAGDOLLS

Down, Toward, 3 + Block, then Throw your opponent with 1 + 3.

Same as Donkey Kick, but with extra damage.

DONKEY KICK

Down, Toward, 3 + Block

This version of the Ragdoll travels farther and does more damage, and it has an extra initial attack that hits low. Condition your opponent by performing a chain combo into close Bomb, then combo the same chain combo into the Ragdolls' attack to hit them while they try to jump away.

POWER ANTI-AIR

Down, Toward, 1 + Block (opponent must be in the air)

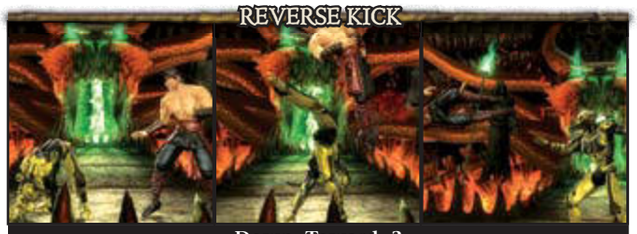
This works the same as the normal version, just with added damage.

Wake-Up Moves

TELEPORT

Down, Away, 1

REVERSE KICK



Down, Toward, 3

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Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

3, 3, Net, Uppercut

COMBO B (5 HITS)

Away + 2, dash in, 1, 2, Anti-Air

COMBO C (7 HITS)

Jump punch, 2, Net, dash in, Cyber Beatdown

Expert Combos

COMBO A (9 HITS)

3, 3, Net, dash in, Away + 2, dash in, 1 , 2, Ragdoll

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COMBO B (13 HITS)

Jump punch, 2, 1, Sticky Bomb, dash in, 3, 3, Net, jump punch, dash in, 1, 2, Anti-Air

COMBO C (13 HITS)

Jump punch, 3, 3, Net, jump punch, 1, 2, 1, Reverse Kick, ducking 3, Ragdolls

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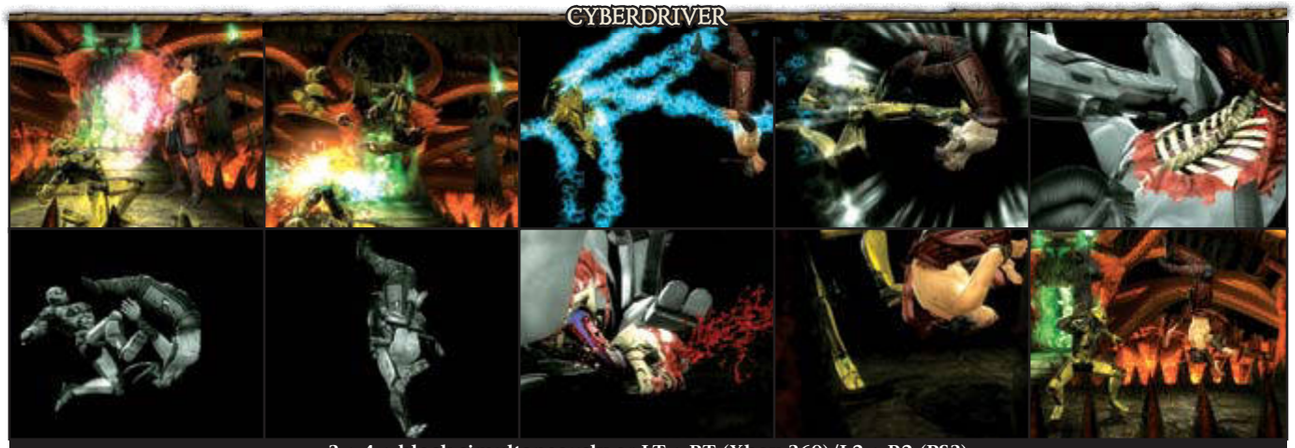
X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

CYBERDRIVER



3 + 4 + block simultaneously or LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

This X-Ray is extremely dangerous because it can be comboed off any chain and used as an ender for juggles. In addition, it can be performed after landing almost any of Cyrax's specials. And since it points up, it also serves as one of the best anti-air moves in the game, next to Kung Lao. Once Cyrax has his X-Ray ready, he's one of the most dangerous characters in the entire cast.

Finishing Moves

BUZZ KILL

Toward, Down, Toward, Away, 2 (sweep distance)

NOTHING BUT NET
Away, Down, Away, Toward, 1

STAGE FATALITY
Down, Up, Block

Best Matchup

Cyrax's best matchup is Baraka. He can be very generous with his projectile selection due to Baraka having a hard time punishing Cyrax's Bomb attempts (without being hit with the Bomb in the process). This keeps Baraka at bay, and that's exactly where Cyrax wants him to be. Baraka's only projectile (the Spark) has bad recovery, so Cyrax can throw his Net frivolously in efforts to land it while Baraka is recovering from performing his Spark. Even if Cyrax trades hits with Baraka, he can still immediately teleport behind Baraka (while he's caught in the Net) and perform whichever combo he likes. Overall, this is a very comfortable match for Cyrax.

Worst Matchup

Cyrax's worst matchup in the game is Nightwolf. His ability to reflect or absorb almost all of Cyrax's projectiles (Net, Sticky Bombs, and Sawblade), coupled with the ability to use the Power Charge to punish Cyrax's attempts to throw the only projectile that Nightwolf can't reflect (the Bombs), makes for a very steep uphill battle. Cyrax is at his best setting traps from a distance, but Nightwolf simply has the answer to anything Cyrax does in that situation.

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ERMAC

Bio

As punishment for resisting Shao Kahn's claim to the realm of Edenia, the souls of the vanquished were torn from their bodies and fused together to form the being now known as Ermac. Bent to Shao Kahn's will, Ermac is his foremost enforcer. The essences of so many souls bound together give Ermac immense telekinetic power—an advantage that will destroy EarthRealm's resistance to Shao Kahn's rule.

General Strategies

Ermac's easy juggles stemming from combos into his Force Lift and follow-ups into his Force Port and Force Push do not take a great deal of practice and inflict a considerable amount of damage. Anything that leads your opponent near the corner with the possibility of Force Port juggle mix-ups will frustrate them into making even more mistakes. Fighting against an unforgiving character like Ermac will cause you to play a lot safer and give you a better understanding of spacing and where you can exploit certain moves.

Another interesting technique is instead of following up your combo starter with a chain combo, you can perform an Air Blast. This gives you an excellent secondary option to players trying to get away. Ermac's unblockable (when fully charged) Away + 2 can be juggled afterward with a low attack into a Force Lift, allowing for some interesting follow-ups. Forgoing the third hit of the 1, 2, 1 chain combo and using a Force Lift instead is a very fast way to get some juicy damage. This also works well after a combo starter.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Ermac	154	7	8	6	X	6	6	5.5	5.5	5.5	6	4.5	5.5	5.5	5	6	7	4.5	5	5.5	6	4	7	6	5	5	5.5	5.5	6

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Basic Moves

BACK FIST

Toward + 1

UPPERCUT

Down + 2

WIND STRIKES

Away + 1

FIST SMASH

Toward + 2

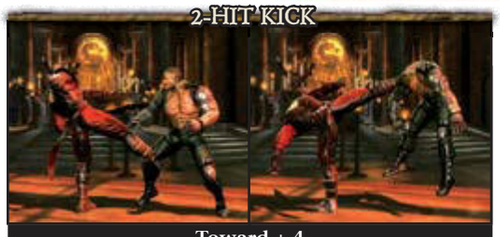
PSYCHIC PALM

Away + 2 (hold 2 to charge)
This move is unblockable when fully charged. It can also be dash canceled.

QUICK KICK

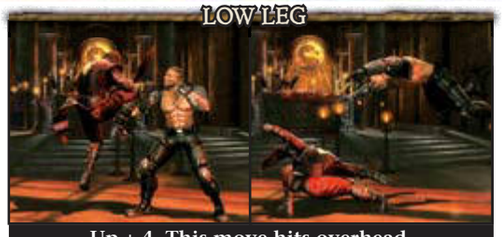
Away + 3

2-HIT KICK



Toward + 4

LOW LEG



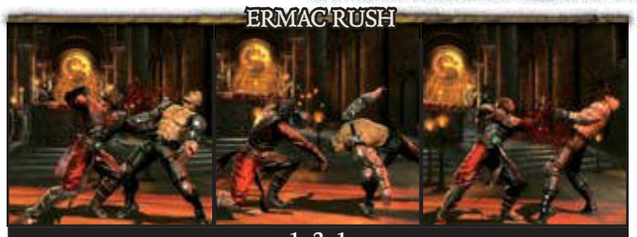
Up + 4 This move hits overhead.

SWEEP

Away + 4

Chain Combos

ERMAC RUSH



1, 2, 1

MYSTERIOUS MASH

Toward + 1, 1, 4

FUSION

Away + 1, 1, 4

WE WIN

Away + 1, 2, Toward + 1

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2, 2

Away + 2, 1, Toward + 2

3, 1, 2

Away + 2, Away + 1

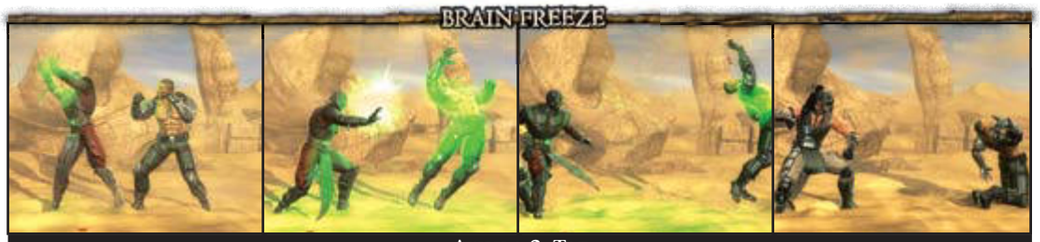
3, 3

Away + 3, 4

Toward + 4, Away + 2

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

Toward + 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.



Away + 2, Tag
This staggers an opponent, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

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MIND-BLOWING

Away + 1, 2, Toward + 1, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

CLEAR YOUR MIND

Toward + 1, 1, Tag

SUBCONSCIOUS

Away + 1, 1, Tag

LUCIDITY

3, 1, Tag

Special Moves

FORCE BALL

Down, Away, 2

This is a pretty good projectile with a nice radius and decent recovery. With the Force Ball, Ermac can hang with almost anyone in a firefight from full screen.

AIRBLAST

Down, Away, 2 (while in the air)

This staggers the opponent backward if they are standing and knocks them to the floor dramatically if they are airborne.

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FORCE PORT

Down, Away, 4 (can be done in the air)

This is a standard teleport. Great for juggles and good to use as a counter if you can get a read on whether someone will throw a projectile.

FORCE LIFT

Down, Away, 1

This lifts the opponent up and slams them to the floor, popping them up for any juggle you want. Ermac's jump kick into Force Port is a great gateway to big damage after a Force Lift.

BUTT SLAM

Down, Down, Up

This move seems like it leaves Ermac too vulnerable in the air to use in the heat of battle, but when used in conjunction with his Force Port and Airblast (to counter an opponent trying to knock you out of the air), it can become a tricky tool in his arsenal.

FORCE PUSH

Away, Toward, 1

This move doesn't do a lot of damage but adds a great deal of finesse to any combo or juggle. It's also fast enough to catch an opponent off guard at half-screen distance.

ENHANCED MOVES

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

FOCUS BALL

Down, Away, 2 + Block

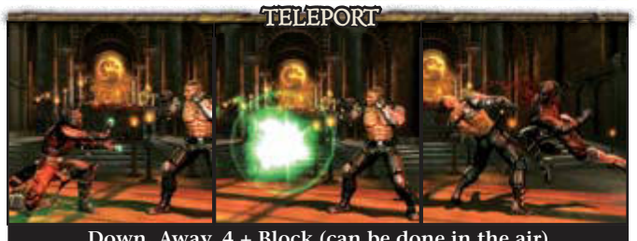
This is just like the normal version, only it cannot be ducked.

FORCE BLAST

Down, Away, 2 + Block (while in the air)

This functions just like the Air Blast only with more damage output.

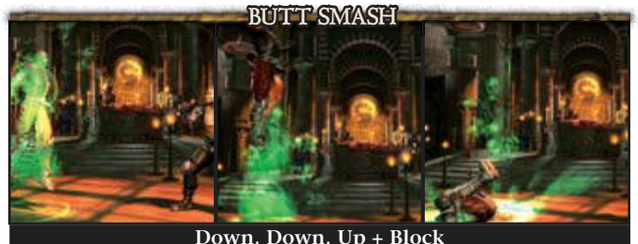
TELEPORT



Down, Away, 4 + Block (can be done in the air)

This version of the Force Port hits one extra time for added damage. If you're quick enough, you can squeeze in a Force Lift or a Force Push before the opponent lands from the second hit of the Teleport.

BUTT SMASH



Down, Down, Up + Block

This functions just like the normal version, just with added damage.

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TELELIFT

Down, Away, 1 + Block

This works just like the Force Lift but adds a very stylish and gratifying second slam to pop the opponent up.

TELEPUSH

Away, Toward, 1 + Block

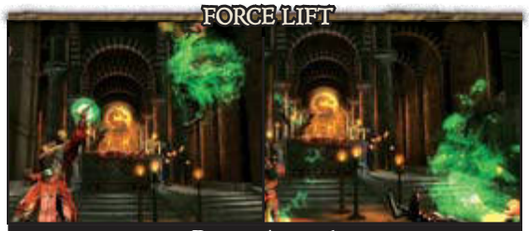
This adds a devastating slam to the already flashy Force Push.

Wake-Up Moves

FORCE PORT

Down, Away, 4

FORCE LIFT



Down, Away, 1

Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

Away + 3, 4, Force Port, Dash in, Uppercut

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COMBO B (6 HITS)

Force Lift, Dash in, 1, 2, 1, Force Ball

COMBO C (7 HITS)

3, 1, Force Lift, Force Port, Force Push

Expert Combos

COMBO A (9 HITS)

Away + 1, 2, Toward + 1, Dash in, Force Lift, Jump Punch, Force Teleport

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COMBO B (12 HITS)

Jump Punch, 3, 1, Force Lift, Jump Punch, Force Port, Dash in, 2, 2 Force Lift

COMBO C (15 HITS)

Jump Punch, Away + 1, 2, Toward + 1, Teleport, Dash in, 2, 2, Force Lift, Jump Punch, Force Port, Ducking 1, Telepush

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

CANNONBALL SLAM

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

Ermac can combo into his X-Ray off of his chain combos, and he can use it as an extremely reliable anti-air. It can hit from a fairly long distance and just begs for the player to use it after a successful Air Force Port. You can also use it to counter an opponent who tries to throw a projectile from within the X-Ray's range (it will override any projectile). Overall, Ermac has little trouble finding a way to land his X-Ray Attack when he's got meter.

Finishing Moves

MIND OVER SPLATTER

Down, Up, Down, Down, Block

PEST CONTROL

Toward, Away, Toward, Down, 4

STAGE FATALITY

Down, Up, Down, Down, 3

Best Matchup

Ermac has a few great matchups, but Baraka gives him the least trouble out of the cast. At half-screen distance (or a little but farther), all of Baraka's special moves can be punished with the Force Push or Force Lift. This leaves Baraka no other choice but to fight hand-to-hand or get pushed full screen or lifted up to get juggled. At a distance, Ermac can control a firefight since his Force Ball recovers much faster than Baraka's Spark. If Baraka tries to jump from full screen, he can be anti-aired clean with the Force Push and sent back to square one. If Baraka waits for Ermac to jump at him in efforts to anti-air with the Chop Chop, Ermac can easily perform an Air Force Port on reaction and counter it cleanly from behind. Baraka simply doesn't have a whole lot to be confident about in this matchup. Ermac has all the answers and can leave Baraka questioning whether this fight can be won at all.

Worst Matchup

Ermac's worst matchup is against Shang Tsung. Even with the ability to teleport behind Shang and punish a projectile, it's still hard to establish a rhythm against him without being worried sick about the Ground Skulls. If Ermac can determine when Shang Tsung will throw them, Shang can perform a Ground Eruption, which can stop Ermac from trying to follow up after a successful Force Port. Beyond Ermac's Force Port, he really can't hang with Shang Tsung's projectile game outside of trading a Force Push with a projectile just to score damage. Either way, you still end up on opposite sides of the screen where Shang is at his most comfortable. This matchup can be competitive if Ermac can see patterns in Shang's projectile assault. If not, he is but another soul for Shang Tsung's collection.

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JADE

Bio

An assassin for Shao Kahn, Jade has earned a reputation as an agile and stealthy warrior. Her family was Edenian nobility and served the emperor once he conquered their realm, giving Jade to him as tribute when she was a child. After she did years of rigorous training in the art of kombat, Shao Kahn awarded her the position of bodyguard to Princess Kitana. Over the centuries, she and Kitana have become close friends, which makes Jade's secret orders from Shao Kahn painful to accept: Should Kitana's loyalty falter, Jade must kill her friend.

General Strategies

Jade's speed, safe attacks, and savvy combo abilities put her near the top of the cast. She has four different types of Boomerang projectiles that are very tricky. The enhanced version doubles back, forcing you to block twice and opening up a world of combo opportunities for Jade. Her Eclipse Kick can always juggle twice if the first Eclipse Kick successfully hits your opponent. Jade's best setup combo is Toward + 2, 1, 2, and she can even juggle with Eclipse Kicks afterward, leaving an opponent helpless in the corner every single time. In addition, her Away + 2 pop-up is deceptive and great for follow-up combos. If done correctly in the hands of experts, her Shadow Glow allows you to go through any attack an opponent throws (Jade will take the damage from the attacks if they hit her) at you; it lasts for only a couple of seconds on the screen, but you can essentially use it to get a free combo every single time. Be wary of her meter if a player has high execution skills, as this makes her one of the deadliest characters in the game.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Jade	130.5	5	6	4.5	4	X	4.5	4	5	5	4.5	4	4.5	4.5	4	6	6	4	5	5	5	4	6.5	5	4	4.5	4.5	5.5	6

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Basic Moves

Chain Combos

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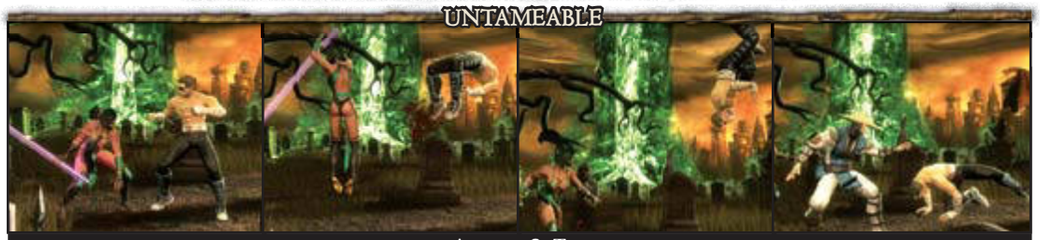
Fast Tags (Tag Mode Only)

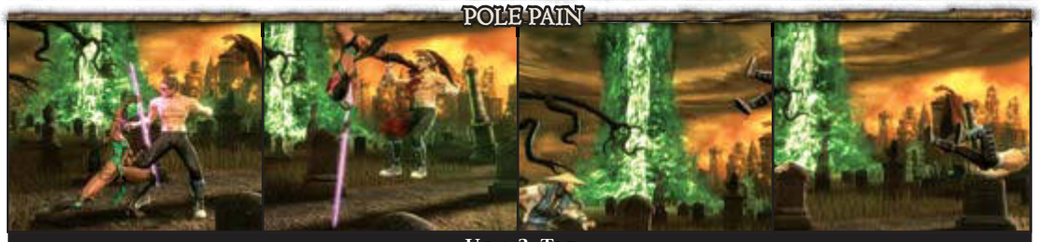
UNTAMEABLE



Away + 2, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

POLE PAIN

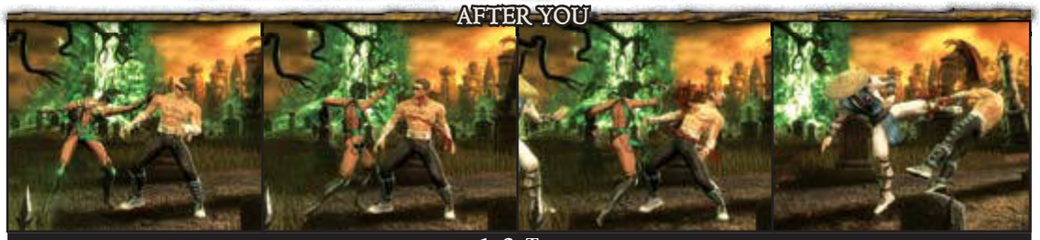


Up + 3, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

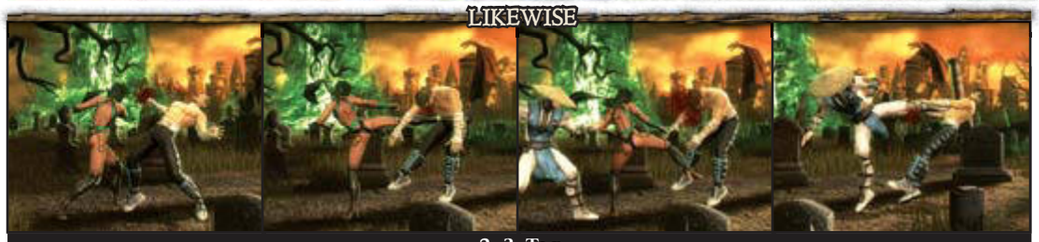
Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

AFTER YOU



1, 2, Tag

LIKEWISE



2, 3, Tag

EDENIAN TAG

Toward + 2, 1, Tag

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DISTRUST

3, 4, Tag

Special Moves

BOOMERANG

Down, Toward, 1

This projectile has a pretty long start-up animation but has decent recovery when thrown.

BOOMERANG UP

Down, Away, 1

Use this version of the Boomerang when you think your opponent will jump, and it will meet them in the air.

BOOMERANG DOWN

Down, Toward, 3

This Boomerang has to be blocked low. Comboing a chain into this move works like a charm if you're able to condition your opponent to look out for the Staff Overhead.

SHADOW KICK

Down, Toward, 4

This works well as a combo ender and is fast enough to catch an unaware opponent off guard from half-screen distance. With timing, Jade can follow up the Shadow kick with another one right after the first one is completed.

SHADOW FLASH

Away, Toward, 3

This move renders Jade impervious to projectiles.

STAFF OVERHEAD

Down, Away, 2

This move hits overhead and pops the opponent up, leaving them open for any juggle combo you like. Her Toward + 2, 1, 2 chain works great after landing the Staff Overhead.

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STAFF GRAB

Down, Toward, 2

This is a gratifying move that is best used as a combo ender whether on the ground or in a juggle.

ENHANCED MOVES

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

REBOOMERANG

Down, Toward, 1 + Block

This works like the normal Boomerang but makes its way back around for a second hit and added damage. Also, the opponent cannot duck this version.

REBOOMERANG UP

Down, Away, 1 + Block

Same as the normal version, but it makes its way back around for a second hit and added damage.

REBOOMERANG DOWN

Down, Toward, 3 + Block

Functions just like the regular Boomerang Down, but makes its way back around for a second (low) hit and added damage.

SHADOW GLOW

Away, Toward, 3 + Block

When the Shadow Glow is activated, Jade becomes impervious to projectiles, and she can walk right through any attack in the game and mount her own attack to punish her opponent as they try to hit her.

STAFF SMASH

Down, Away, 2 + Block

This version of the Overhead Staff works the same way, but comes out significantly faster.

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ECLIPSE KICK

Down, Toward, 4 + Block

This works just like the Shadow Kick, only this travels full-screen distance and the opponent cannot duck it.

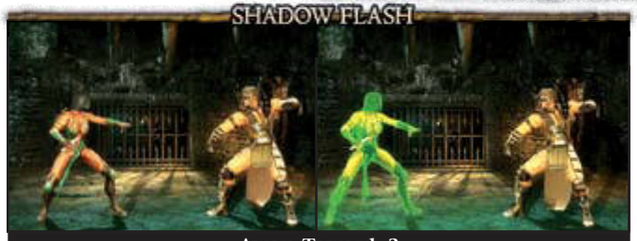
STAFF SLAM

Down, Toward, 2 + Block

This can be applied the same way as the Staff Grab, but this version adds two extra slams, making any combo that incorporates it as stylish and damaging as possible.

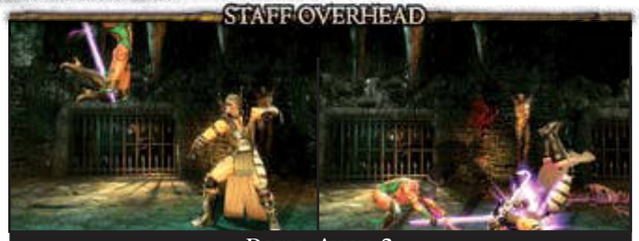
Wake-Up Moves

SHADOW FLASH



Away, Toward, 3

STAFF OVERHEAD



Down, Away, 2

X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

STAFF BUSTER

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

Jade's X-Ray is very good, as it can be comboed off any of her chains and landed within any juggle combo. It's exceptionally fast and travels the entire screen distance. This means that any opponent looking for a firefight from afar must watch out for Jade activating her Shadow Flash and performing her X-Ray from full screen (before they recover from throwing the projectile).

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Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

Toward + 2, 1, 2, Jade Shadow Kick

COMBO B (4 HITS)

Away + 2, 4, Staff Grab

COMBO C (5 HITS)

2, 3, Toward + 2, Jade Shadow Kick, Jade Shadow Kick follow-up

Expert Combos

COMBO A (7 HITS)

3, 4, Reboomerang, Jade Eclipse Kick, Jade Shadow Kick follow-up

COMBO B (8 HITS)

Jump Punch, 3, Staff Overhead, Dash in, Toward + 2, 1, Jade Shadow Kick, Dash in, Ducking 1, Jade Shadow Kick

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COMBO C (10 HITS)

Jump Punch, Away + 1, Staff Overhead, Dash in, Away + 2, Dash in, 2, 3, Reboomerang Down

FINISHING MOVES

HEAD-A-RANG

Up, Up, Down, Toward, 1

HALF MAST

Away, Down, Away, Down, 4

STAGE FATALITY

Away, Toward, Down, Block

BEST MATCHUP

Jade's best matchup is probably against Sheeva. Jade can mount a good amount of close-quarter offense by comboing low attacks and chains into the Staff Overhead as well as 3, 4 into Boomerang Down. Once a Staff Overhead is comboed off a chain, Sheeva is forced to stand and block it; if she tries to jump away, the staff will knock her back to the ground on her way up. From a distance, Jade wins the projectile war due to her Shadow Flash. If Sheeva performs her Jump Stomp, Jade can activate the Shadow Glow and take the hit just to initiate her own offense as Sheeva lands. This match isn't a complete blowout, but Jade just has way more tools to work with in this matchup.

WORST MATCHUP

Jade's worst matchup is probably Nightwolf. Her Shadow Flash is not impervious to Nightwolf's Lightning. Using that as a cornerstone, Nightwolf can make Jade think hard about which projectile is coming (and how she should deal with it). For instance, if she gets hit with Lightning and figures Nightwolf will perform an Arrow Shot after, Nightwolf can perform a multi Arrow instead, which will almost certainly knock her out of her jump. Or he can wait till she lands and perform a Thunder Storm, popping her up for a combo ending with a Shoulder to push her back full-screen distance away. She can't throw Boomerangs because they will get reflected, and even though her Shadow Kick is fast and travels far, Nightwolf can play that game, too, from almost full screen with his Power Charge. All in all, Nightwolf overmatches Jade and can keep her in check for most if not all of an entire match.

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JAX

Bio

A decorated member of the U.S. Special Forces and a formidable close-kombat warrior, Major Jackson Briggs's current mission is to bring down the notorious criminal organization known as the Black Dragon. With Lieutenant Sonya Blade, he has seized many of their weapons caches. But when a trusted informant, Kano, was revealed to be a high-ranking member of the Black Dragon, Jax made Kano's capture his priority. Kano has gotten the better of Jax thus far, leading the Special Forces into numerous deadly ambushes. Jax and Sonya finally cornered Kano on an uncharted island but were overpowered by the island's inhabitants. They have now been forced into a sadistic ritual of bloody kombat.

General Strategies

Jax has generally changed over the years from defensive machine to offensive powerhouse. Often you will find yourself having to close the gap to get in close, but once you are in, your opponent will have a hard time keeping you off them. Jax's Toward + 4, 1, 3 combo is a low attack starter and is very dangerous if it begins with a combo starter from jumping in with Attack 1 or 2. Useful setups include 1, 1, Overhead Smash, which knocks the opponent down and allows you to follow up with the mix-up of your choice. Crouching Attack 4 canceled into a Dash Punch can be a good surprise maneuver but it can be ducked. Utilizing the Overhead Smash cancel from low attacks will require your opponent to block high and is hard to see coming. For projectile games, Jax's Energy Wave can be ducked, but the enhanced version can't. Use this to your advantage in projectile wars.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Jax	131	6	6	4	4	5.5	X	4.5	4	4.5	4.5	4	5	5	4	6	6	4	4.5	5	5.5	3	6	4.5	4.5	5	5	5	6

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Basic Moves

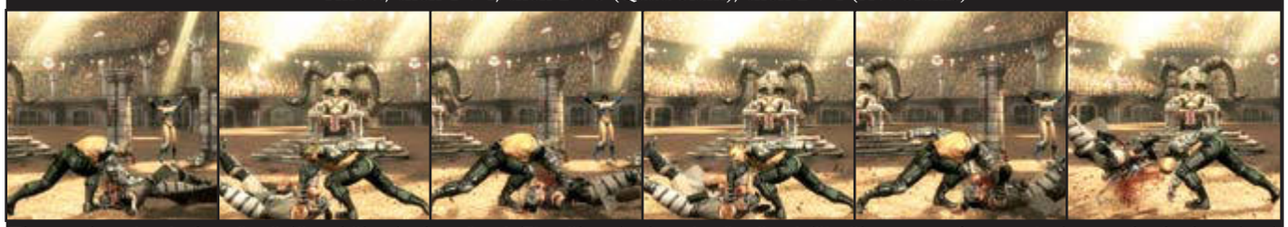
Down + 2 | Away + 1 | Toward + 3 | Toward + 4 | Away + 4

THROW SPECIALS

Throw, then 1 + 4 (Triple Slam)

Throw, then 1 + 4, then 2 + 3 (Quad Slam)

Throw, then 1 + 4, then 2 + 3 (Quad Slam), then 2 + 4 (Five Slams)



Throw, then 1 + 4, then 2 + 3 (Quad Slam), then 2 + 4 (Five Slams), then 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 (Six Slams; two frame window to do the last slam)

Chain Combos

1, 2, 3

2, 1

Away + 1, 2, 4 The second hit of this chain hits overhead.

2, 2

Toward + 4, 1, 3

Toward + 4, 1, 4

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CHAIN OF COMMAND

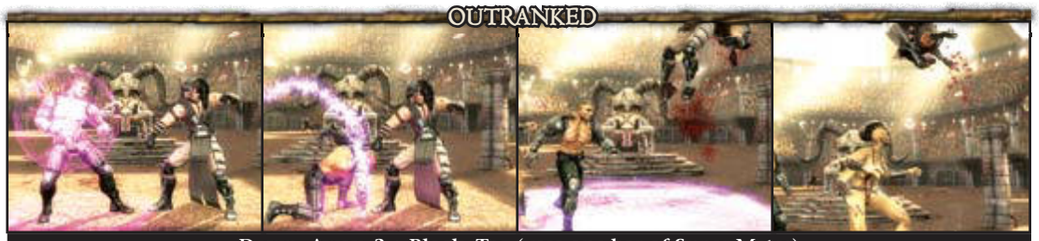
2, Toward + 2, Away + 1 The second hit of this chain hits overhead.

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

MAJORITY RULES

Down, Away, 3, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

OUTRANKED



Down, Away, 3 + Block, Tag (uses one bar of Super Meter)
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

TAG COMBOS (TAG MODE ONLY)

MAJOR MUSCLES

Away + 1, 2, Tag

ALLOYVER YOU

2, Toward + 2, Tag

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BRIGG'S DA NOISE

2, Toward + 2, Away + 1, Tag

Special Moves

ENERGY WAVE

Down, Away, 2

A fairly fast projectile attack with pretty good recovery. Most chains combo into this, and it can also be used as a combo ender.

DASH PUNCH

Down, Toward, 2

This extremely quick move can be used in the middle of chain combos or as an anti-air or a combo ender. It's best comboed off of Jax's Toward + 4 attack that hits low (or his "Advance Force" chain that starts low). Or it can be used to suddenly assault an opponent if they are in range and aren't ducking.

GROUND POUND (CLOSE)

Down, Away, 3

In order for this relatively slow move to work, you must condition the opponent to sit still or duck-block for a split second. Do this by landing either a low attack (such as Jax's sweep or Toward + 4) or an overhead attack (such as the second hit of 2, Toward + 2 and the Overhead Smash) more than the opponent would like you to. Sweep an opponent twice in a row and they will almost certainly stay duck-blocking in anticipation for the next one. At that point you can perform a close Ground Pound without worrying about an opponent jumping away from it.

GROUND POUND (MEDIUM)

Down, Toward, 3

Landing a Dash Punch puts the opponent at the perfect distance to perform this move. Ground Pounds aren't inescapable, but by timing the move so that it hits the ground as the opponent is getting up, it forces them to jump or get popped up.

AIR GOTCHA GRAB

Down, Away, 1

This is a great anti-air and is a perfect follow-up to landing a close Ground Pound.

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GROUND POUND (FAR)

Down, Away, Toward, 3

This move is best used in the middle of a full-screen projectile war,: since you will naturally duck under most projectiles during the Ground Pound. It can also be used against opponents who like to roll backward every time after being knocked down, thus rolling right into a far Ground Pound.

OVERHEAD SMASH

Down, Up, 4

This move can set up an opponent for Ground Pounds, Dash Punches, and Jax's X-Ray. The Overhead Smash leaves the opponent grounded long enough for Jax to formulate what he will follow it up with; for the opponent it's a nerve-racking guessing game (especially with no meter to do an enhanced wake-up attack). Toward + 4 is a great attack to combo the Overhead Smash off of since it forces the opponent to block low and will connect for a two-hit combination if Toward + 4 lands.

GOTCHA GRAB

Down, Toward, 1

This crowd-pleasing move can be used in the middle of Jax's chain combos and within juggle combos.

BACK BREAKER

THROW (While in the air)

A great flashy anti-air that can also be comboed off of a jump attack.

ENHANCED MOVES

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

ASSAULT WAVE

Down, Away, 2 + Block

This functions like the normal version but fires a secondary projectile that cannot be ducked (it has to be duck-blocked). The second projectile covers enough horizontal space to hit an opponent trying to jump over it if they mistime it. Also, from full screen, it serves as a great setup for Jax's far Ground Pound (since the opponent's tendency is to remain crouching for a split second after duck-blocking a projectile).

GROUND QUAKE

Down, Away, 3 + Block

This functions like the regular Ground Pound but with the added benefit of it being inescapable if performed on a downed opponent (they can't roll out/jump away). This means he can land a Ground Quake after jump kicks, an Overhead Smash, and even after a regular Ground Pound. What's more is that the Ground Quake is cancelable by simply dashing toward or away before the Ground Quake animation is complete. Canceling out a Ground Quake and attacking your opponent (with moves such as the Dash Punch or Back Breaker) as they try to jump away is key.

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DASH FIST

Down, Toward, 2 + Block (Throws opponent)

This version of the Dash Punch transitions into a throw when landed. This is not only very gratifying, but also deals significantly more damage than the normal Dash Punch.

GOTCHA BEATDOWN

Down, Toward, 1 + Block

This version of the Gotcha Grab deals three extra hits and significantly more damage.

AIR GOTCHA BLAST

Down, Away, 1 + Block

Use this like you would the normal Air Gotcha Grab, but with the intention of taking off more life while looking flashy.

ELITE SMASH

Down, Up, 4 + Block

You can't land a free Ground Quake after landing an Elite Smash. However, when landed, it transitions into a throw maneuver for added flash and damage.

Wake-Up Moves

GROUND POUND (CLOSE)

Down, Away, 3

GROUND POUND (MEDIUM)

Down, Toward, 3

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GROUND POUND (FAR)

Down, Away, Toward, 3

GOTCHA GRAB

Down, Toward, 1

AIR GOTCHA GRAB

Down, Away, 1

INTERMEDIATE COMBOS

COMBO A (5 HITS)

Jump punch, 1, 2, Energy Wave

COMBO B (5 HITS)

2, Toward + 2, Gotcha Grab

COMBO C (5 HITS)

Ground Pound (close), Jump Kick, Back Breaker

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Expert Combos

COMBO A (6 HITS)

Ground Pound (close), Away + 1, 2, 4, Dash Fist

COMBO B (6 HITS)

Jump punch, 2, Toward + 2, Away + 1, Air Gotcha Grab

COMBO C (11 HITS)

Ground Pound (close), 1, 2 dash in, 2, 1, Gotcha Beatdown

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

BRIGG'S BASH

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

This X-Ray Attack is an unblockable grab that doesn't travel very far but does great damage. This can also act as a near-certain anti-air. To get the most out of this X-Ray, set this up the same way you would a close Ground Pound, as the amount of time it takes for the X-Ray to grab the opponent is virtually identical to the amount of time a Ground Pound takes until it hits the floor. Think along those terms and you'll be setting foes up for defeat in no time.

Finishing Moves

SMASH AND GRAB

Away, Toward, Toward, Away, 2 (touching opponent)

THREE POINTS!
Toward, Toward, Away, Down, 3

STAGE FATALITY
Down, Forward, Down, 1

Best Matchup

Jax is the kind of character who, once he gets in, sticks to the opponent like glue and forces him to look for an exit. Out of all the cast, Sheeva feels this pressure more than anyone else due to her relatively slow start-up animations for her attacks. When Jax starts attacking with his chain combos, Sheeva has to grin and bear it until there is a clear opening for her to jump away; even then, her height makes it extremely difficult for her to jump out without taking a hit on her way up. In the event that Sheeva has enough room to perform her Jump Stomp (or even if she combos a chain into it), Jax can fire off his Dash Punch to get out of harm's way at the very last second. Sheeva is forced to pick her shots and play defensive against Jax, as her size and lack of mobility plays right into Jax's aggression.

Worst Matchup

The worst possible match for Jax is Shang Tsung. Jax is best when he is in close quarters, bullying with his chain combos and Close Ground Pound. Shang Tsung's projectile game is so strong that Jax feels like he has to thread a needle in order to get in close. The varying distances of the Ground Skull keep Jax from doing things such as a whiffed Dash Punch just to close the gap. This will cause him to inevitably run into an Ground Skull and get hit with several more projectiles (such as the Triple Skull), pushing Jax back to full-screen distance, back to square one. Magnifying the difficulty is the fact that Jax's long-distance attacks (the Far Ground Pound and Energy Wave) are too slow to score a good trade with Shang's Ground Skull and is rarely ever able to break his momentum. Without patience, this matchup is hell for Jax, and even then it's an uphill struggle.

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JOHNNY CAGE

Evo

There is no greater martial arts movie star than Johnny Cage. Films such as *Dragon Fist, Time Smashers,* and *Citizen Cage* have made him one of the most highly paid actors in Hollywood. But there is more to Johnny than even he knows. He is a descendant of an ancient Mediterranean cult that bred warriors for the gods—warriors who possessed power beyond that of mortals. This legacy has made Johnny Cage a star. More important, it will aid him in the battle to come.

General Strategies

At first glance, Johnny Cage does not look like he has a lot going for him. However, his strength lies in his ability to "cage" an opponent into making crucial mistakes at inopportune moments. For example, his Shadow Kick can be ducked and uppercutted pretty easily, but his Eclipse Kick (think enhanced move Shadow Kick) can't be ducked and you can't jump at it. What this creates during a match is constant Super Meter watching, making sure you aren't jumping or ducking at the wrong time.

On offense, Johnny Cage's jump-in Attack 1 (combo starter, and can cross up) can be followed up with Toward + 4 (which is an overhead attack); if blocked, you can go into standing 1, 1, or a quick crouching 1 for frame advantage and mix-up setups into other combos, a grab, or resets. An excellent wake-up move for Cage is his Nut Punch. Since invincibility frames are added on wake-up moves and the Nut Punch is a medium attack, it is recommended that opponents keep away from Cage if he has Super Meter. Even deadlier is his Wake-Up Flip Kick, which if enhanced acts as an anti-air as well, making Cage seem like a tank when he has meter.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Johnny Cage	155	7	7	6	4.5	6	5.5	X	5	5.5	5.5	5	5.5	6	5	6.5	6	5	5.5	5.5	6	4.5	7	6	5	5.5	6	5	8

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Basic Moves

CHARGE PALM

Away + 2

CHARGE PALM CANCEL

Away + 2 (can be canceled by a dash)

The fully charged version of this move is an unblockable attack that allows for any kind of follow-up you'd like, but it takes a while to get the full impact. However, it's the fact that the move can be dash-canceled that makes it threatening. When used up close, it makes an opponent try to avoid it by back dashing, jumping, or performing a wake-up attack (since nobody wants to sit still and get hit with an unblockable attack). It is then when you can beat them "on their way out" with whatever move you'd like (such as Johnny's Shadow Kick if your opponent tries to jump), or simply block if they try to counter your Charge Palm with their own special attack.

2-HIT ELBOW

Toward + 2

AXE KICK

Toward + 4 This move hits overhead.

POP UP

Away + 3

RISING KNEE

Toward + 4

SWEEP

Back + 4

Chain Combos

OUT TAKE

1, 1, 1

SHOWTIME

1, 1, Toward + 1

STAND IN

1, 1, 4

CROSS CUTTING

1, 3, 2

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2, 1, Toward + 2 The last hit of this chain hits overhead.

2, 1, Away + 4 The third hit of this chain hits low.

Toward + 3, 2

4, 4

Toward + 3, 3, Away + 3 The last hit of this chain hits overhead.

Fast Tags (Tag Mode Only)

Away + 2 (hold), Tag

Toward + 4, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

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Away + 3, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

2, 1, Toward + 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

1, 3, Tag

2, 1, Tag

Toward + 3, 3, Tag

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Special Moves

Low Forceball

Down, Toward, 2

High Forceball

Down, Away, 2

Flipkick

Down, Away, 3

Shadow Kick

Away, Toward, 4

Nut Punch

Away, Down + 1

Landing this attack leaves the opponent rendered motionless for a brief moment, allowing Cage time to mount any attack he wants. Sweeps and overheads work great in this situation.

Enhanced Moves

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

Double Low Ball

Down, Toward, 2 + Block

This version of the Low Forceball covers excellent space on the screen and is almost a sure bet to end the fight from afar in a matter of life and death.

Double High Ball

Down, Away, 2 + BLOCK

Same benefit as the Double Low Ball but this should be used if you think the opponent will jump at you in a life-or-death situation.

Ultra Flipkick

Down, Away, 3 + Block

This version of the Flip Kick allows for extra hits and extra damage. This is also an excellent wake-up attack.

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ECLIPSE KICK

Away, Toward, 4 + Block

Like the Shadow Kick, this move is quick and effective, but with the added benefit of traveling full screen (at the same blazing speed as the regular Shadow Kick).

NUTCRACKER

Away, Down, 1 + Block

This version works like the normal Nut Punch but with the added benefit of being invulnerable to anything attacking you as you perform the Nutcracker. This move works great after an opponent blocks a chain combo and tries to retaliate, thus running right into the Nutcracker.

Wake-Up Moves

FLIPKICK

Down, Away, 3

NUT PUNCH

Away, Down + 1

Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (6 HITS)

Jump punch, 2, 1, Flipkick

COMBO B (4 HITS)

2, 1, Toward + 2, Shadow kick

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COMBO C (5 HITS)

Toward + 3, 3, Away + 3, Nut Punch

Expert Combos

COMBO A (10 HITS)

Charge Palm, dash in, Pop Up, 1, 1, Double Low ball, Eclipse Kick

COMBO C (15 HITS)

Jump punch, Axe Kick, dash in, 1, 1, dash in, 1, 1 dash in 1, 1 dash in, 4, 4, Eclipse Kick

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COMBO B (9 HITS)

2, 2, Toward + 2, dash in, 4, 4, Ultra Flipkick

X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

BALL BUSTER (ACTS AS PARRY/COUNTER)

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

This X-Ray is to be used defensively, as it is a parry. For an opponent who likes to jump at you, this works like a charm. After you land this X-Ray, the opponent is popped up ever so slightly, allowing for Cage to dash in and land any attack he can deal to the opponent while they are airborne. The Flip Kick is a great follow-up in this situation.

Finishing Moves

HEADS UP!

Toward, Toward, Away, Down, 3

AND THE WINNER IS

Down, Toward, Down, Toward, 4

STAGE FATALITY

Down, Back, Forward, Block

Best Matchup

Johnny Cage is comfortable against most of the cast, but Sheeva will give him the least amount of trouble. All of her moves generally have slower-than-normal start-up animation, and Johnny Cage has some of the quickest offense in the game. This means in close quarters, he beats her to the punch almost every time, even if he reacts slightly later than she does. Cage can easily counter her Jump Stomp with his Nutcracker or Ultra Flip Kick. Also, her height (though imposing) makes it a chore for her to get over and under Cage's respective projectiles. For Cage, fighting Sheeva can feel a bit like target practice.

Worst Matchup

Cage's least favorable matchup is Shang Tsung, whose Up Skull sets the stage in this bout, as Johnny Cage is not able to punish them or trade with them without getting knocked backward to the floor (which reestablishes the distance Shang needs to apply more Up Skull pressure). Shang also builds plenty of meter by using the Up Skulls, so the longer Cage goes without closing the distance, the more likely Shang will have a combo breaker ready to cut short whatever Cage intends to do with the opportunity. Cage has to curb his flashiness and be patient, which is very difficult for him. If only he could use a stuntman for this matchup.

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KABAL

Bio

Once a member of the Black Dragon clan, Kabal gave up his life of crime and put his fighting skills to more positive uses. He joined the New York City police force to kombat the underworld element he once served. This transition helped ease the pain of dark memories. But when New York was invaded, he underwent another transformation—one that would afflict him physically. Severely injured in battle, he is doomed to wear a life-support system forever.

General Strategies

Generally, Kabal's spin (Nomad Dash) is one of the fastest moves in any *Mortal Kombat* game and in this reiteration there is no exception. The Nomad Dash works as anti-air and can be canceled by pressing Away + Block, creating some insane mind games. For example, Kabal can throw air and ground projectiles and use the fake Nomad Dash to get closer to an opponent and set up another combo, sweep, grab, or overhead attack (Tornado Slam) into more shenanigans. Simple combos from a jump-in kick into a projectile can be followed up with a dash in Toward + 4 and any special move to continue the carnage—add to the damage if this begins with a Nomad Dash; you get an easy 30 percent just from that. Practicing timing on late jump-ins with deep Attack 3 or 4 are integral to maximizing Kabal's damage output capabilities. For old schoolers: Kabal's Away + 1, 2, 1 chain combo is reminiscent of his *Mortal Kombat 3* days and is his basic attack combo up close.

Frustrating an opponent is a staple of Kabal's arsenal. Regardless of the experience you may have playing against him, there are certain tactics you can prepare for but will still not be able to overcome playing against an expert-level Kabal player. Even something as simple as not realizing that Kabal's Saw Blades require you to block low will do you in at the end if you are not prepared. Your best bet is to have a clear mind-set and play safe against Kabal, not taking too many risks that can cause you to lose a match very quickly if you are not familiar with Kabal's setups and mind games.

Character Tier Preview

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Kabal	145	6	6	5.5	4.5	5	6	5	X	5.5	5	4	5	5.5	4	6	6	4.5	5	6	6	4.5	6.5	5.5	5	5.5	5.5	5	7

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Basic Moves

Chain Combos

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NOMAD'S FEAR

Toward + 3, 2

EVISCERATE

Toward + 4, 1 + 2
The second hit of this chain hits overhead.

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

UP NEXT

Away + 1, 2, 1, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

TAG COMBOS (TAG MODE ONLY)

YOUR TURN

1, 1, Away + 4, Tag

PARTNERS IN CRIME

Away + 1, 2, Tag

REBIRTH

2, 1, Tag

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Special Moves

Gas Blast

Away, Away, 1 (can be done in the air)

This projectile has a good radius but recovers much slower than most of the casts' projectiles. However, the Air Gas Blast can be performed low enough to the ground where it can be fired off in fairly quick succession with very little recovery time.

Buzzsaw

Away, Away, 3

This is great move from far away and in close. It has good speed and hits low, so if your opponent tries to dash forward in efforts to close in on you while you're throwing Air Gas Blasts, don't be afraid to throw the Buzzsaw, as it is very hard to block low on reaction from half-screen distance.

Nomad Dash (Can be Canceled by Pressing Away + Block)

Away, Toward, 4

This move leaves the opponent spinning in one spot, open for attack. You can combo it off of any chain or use it in juggle combos, and it makes for an excellent wake-up attack. You can also cancel out of this move by pressing Away + Block during the dash. Use this to make the opponent wonder if you will commit to a full Nomad Dash or not.

Tornado Slam

Down, Away, 2

This flashy move hits overhead and works like a charm after sweeping an opponent twice in a row or successfully landing a Buzzsaw in close.

Enhanced Moves

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

Nomad Charge

Away, Toward, 4 + Block

This functions like the regular version, only this is significantly faster.

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VAPOR BLAST

Away, Away, 1 + Block (can be done in the air)
This works the same as the Gas Blast but delivers an extra hit and deals more damage.

SAW BLADES

Away, Away, 3 + Block
This version of the Buzzsaw sends two blades at the opponent instead of one and does significantly more damage.

CYCLONE SLAM

Down, Away, 2 + Block
This adds two more spins to the Tornado Slam, making it even flashier and more damaging when used in combos.

WAKE-UP MOVES

NOMAD DASH

Away, Toward, 4

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Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (3 HITS)

Jump Kick, Gas Blast, Buzzsaw

COMBO B (4 HITS)

Away + 1, 2, 1, Dash in, Uppercut

COMBO C (6 HITS)

Jump Punch, Toward + 3, 1, Tornado Slam

Expert Combos

COMBO A (7 HITS)

Jump Kick, Gas Blast, Nomad Dash, 1, 1, 1, Vapor Blast

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COMBO B (10 HITS)

Jump Punch, Toward + 3, 1, Nomad Dash, Dash back, Jump Kick, Gas Blast, Dash in, Toward + 4, Cyclone Slam

COMBO C (13 HITS)

Away + 1, 2, 1, Jump Kick, Gas Blast, Nomad Dash, Dash back, Jump Kick, Gas Blast, Dash in, Toward + 4, Cyclone Slam

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

KABAL'S DEEP

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

In addition to being able to combo into his X-Ray off of any chain, Kabal can also use it as an ender for juggle combos. You can use Kabal's X-Ray just like you would his Nomad Dash on wake-up as well. If an opponent happens to get hit with an Air Gas Blast shot low to the ground, Kabal can recover and land the X-Ray before they fall. Lastly, due to the full-screen travel distance and speed, Kabal can also anti-air with it no matter where you are on screen or which direction you jump (toward of backward).

Finishing Moves

HOOK UP

Away, Toward, Away, Toward, 1 (sweep distance)

I TAKES GUTS

Down, Down, Away, Toward, Block

STAGE FATALITY

Down, Down, 4

Best Matchup

Kabal matches up very well with most of the cast, but Jax has one of the harder times fighting him. Kabal's Air Gas Blasts are a pain for Jax to get around if performed low to the ground. He can't combat it with his Energy Wave due to Kabal recovering fast enough to block it, and he is given little to no openings to cover ground by whiffing a Dash Punch. Throw in the sneaky Buzzsaw to worry about as Jax tries to advance forward and you've got what seems like an obstacle course for Jax to solve. Not to mention, Kabal can further keep Jax hesitant but canceling out of a Nomad Dash at any point, then jumping away, just to instill a lingering fear that he will commit to a dash at some point. This is another match for Jax where his patience is tested. This is Kabal's match to lose, as he can assume control of the pace almost at will.

Worst Matchup

Kabal's worst matchup is probably Raiden. Raiden's Bolt attack and Teleport really keep Kabal from being liberal with his Air Gas Blasts. Kabal's best when playing keep-away, so the fact that Raiden can appear behind him at any time forces him to worry about when that will happen and what will happen after it. It's this air of discomfort that gives Raiden the freedom to use his weapons and impose his will. He can use the Torpedo to catch Kabal jumping backward before he lands and to counter right over a Buzzsaw attempt. He can use the Bolt attack to keep Kabal still long enough to close the distance with a jump, a dash-in, or a Teleport (after which he can sweep or throw to make things tricky). As noted before, Kabal matches up well with almost everyone, but it's the lack of control over the fight's tempo that makes Raiden such a worthy opponent.

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KANO

Bio

Undisciplined and dangerous, Kano is a thug for hire. From weapons dealing to cold-blooded murder, his military training has made him the go-to man for the Black Dragon. But when an operation went to hell and his face got horribly mutilated, Kano's crime spree was almost ended. Ever the survivor, he used his underworld connections to find a cyberneticist capable of repairing the damage. Kano was fitted with several high-tech enhancements, most notably his eye laser. With these new weapons, Kano's reign of terror has only just begun.

General Strategies

Kano's style requires an opponent to block out of fear of his instant Ball and Down Ball attacks, which can also be done in the air at very late angles. His Up Ball is an excellent anti-air and his Knife Throw is extremely quick. Kano's high-low "flinch and you will be comboed" style can be frustrating to play against, but if you are a die-hard Kano user back from the *Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3* days, you will find that Kano completely fits your style. Kano is one of the few characters in the game with an Air Throw that can be easily connected from a jump kick or juggle and takes off a considerable amount of damage, so keep that in mind each time you jump at your opponent, especially if you are not as confident in your abilities as a technical fighting game player.

Kano's projectile is among the quickest in the game, and with the danger of fighting Kano in an air-to-air game, it is tough to judge when he is going to do something next or what is actually going to happen because of the extremely fast nature of his special moves. A quick and easy way to get some slick damage involves using his Away + 1, 1, 2 chain combo into 3, 3, or repeating the Away + 1, 1, 2 chain combo. Other effective juggles are Chain Combos 2, 1, 2 (can be repeated on an airborne opponent or used as a special move after the eighth hit) and his Toward + 3, Away + 2 Chain Combo.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Kano	140.5	6	6	5.5	4.5	5	5.5	4.5	4.5	X	5	4	5	5	4.5	6	7	5	5.5	5	6	5	6	5	4.5	5.5	4.5	4.5	6

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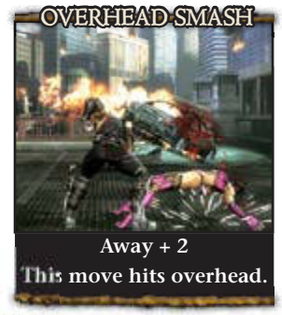
Basic Moves



Chain Combos

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UPLIFTING FORCE

Away + 2, 3
The first hit of this chain hits overhead.

SMASHING TIME

Away + 2, Toward + 1
The first hit of this chain hits overhead.

DOUBLE DRAGON

3, 3

THE RAGE KICKS

Toward + 3, 3

MEAN MACHINE

Toward + 3, Away + 2

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

LEAD HEAD

Away + 1, 1, 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

EAR TO EAR

2, 1, 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

BLOODTHIRSTY

Toward + 3, Away + 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

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Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

TROUBLESOME

1, 1, Tag

DELINQUENT

Away + 1, 1, Tag

VILLAINOUS

2, 1, Tag

MISCHIEVOUS

Away + 2, Tag

Special Moves

BALL

Toward, Down, Away, Toward (half circle back, then toward)

This move is very fast and does a good deal of damage. This makes for a great juggle ender as well.

DOWN BALL

Toward, Down, Away, Toward (half circle back, then toward while in the air)

This can be used to counter projectiles on reaction from almost full-screen distance. It can also be incorporated into juggles as an ender.

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UP BALL

Down, Toward, 2

This is one of the cleanest anti-airs in the game. This knocks anyone out of the sky and can be incorporated into juggle combos. It also makes for an effective wake-up attack.

CHOKE

Down, Toward, 1

Possibly the most gratifying move in the game, this makes for an entertaining combo ender.

AIR THROW

Throw (while in the air)

This is a great alternative if you have a feel for when your opponent will jump, but it is best used as a juggle ender (preferably after a jump kick).

KNIFE THROW

Down, Away, 2

One of the best projectiles in the game, hands down. Good speed and exceptional recovery. Kano can zone very well with this move and the recovery is so quick that he has time to anti-air an opponent with a Ball if they jump over it.

ENHANCED MOVES

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

KANO BALL

Toward, Down, Away, Toward (half circle back, then toward) + Block (hold Block to delay)

This functions just like the normal Ball but hits two more times and deals more damage. If held long enough, the Kano Ball becomes unblockable.

UPRISE BALL

Down, Toward, 2 + Block

You can use this the same way as the normal version, but this version does an extra hit and deals extra damage.

DOWNWARD BALL

Toward, Down, Away, Toward + Block (half circle back, then toward while in air)

This works just like the regular Down Ball but with an added hit and a grab attack that does double the damage. It also looks twice as cool when incorporated into a juggle combo.

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KANO CHOKE

Down, Toward, 1 + Block

This deals more damage and is a bit more gratifying than the normal version by way of extra "emphasis" in Kano's actions!

KNIFE TOSS

Down, Away, 2 + Block

This functions just the same as the normal version, only Kano hurls two knives and deals more damage.

Wake-Up Moves

BALL

Toward, Down, Away, Toward (half circle back, then toward)

UP BALL

Down, Toward, 2

Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

Jump Punch, Away + 2, Toward + 1, Knife Throw

COMBO B (4 HITS)

Away + 1, 1, 2, Up Ball

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COMBO C (5 HITS)

2, 2, 1, Air Throw

Expert Combos

COMBO A (7 HITS)

Jump Punch, Away + 1, 1, 2, Dash in, Toward + 1, 1, Kano Choke

COMBO B (8 HITS)

Jump Punch, 2, 1, 2, Jump Kick, Downward Ball

COMBO C (11 HITS)

Jump Punch, Away + 1, 1, 2, Dash in, 2, 1, 2, Jump Kick, Downward Ball

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

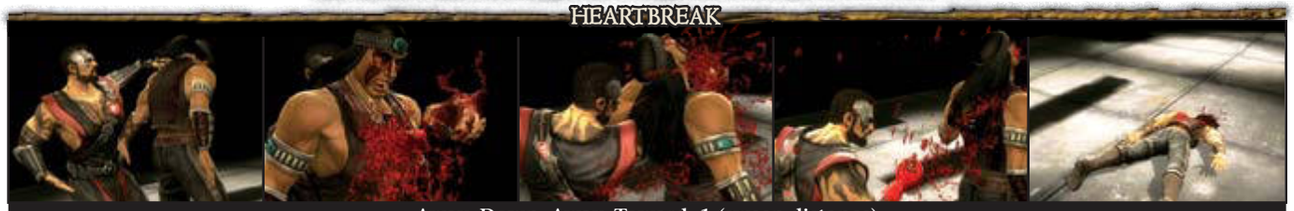
JUST THE TIP

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

Kano's X-Ray doesn't go very far but can still be landed relatively easy. Due to Kano's strong projectile game, it's an opponent's natural tendency to jump over the knives. When Kano has the meter, he can anti-air a jumping opponent with his X-Ray (the opponent jumps right into it and gets sucked in). Also, another way to land it is to train the opponent to look out for his Away + 2 overhead attack and then perform the X-Ray when you normally would try an overhead; it's just fast enough to catch an opponent on the ground while they are expecting an overhead attack.

Finishing Moves

HEARTBREAK



Away, Down, Away, Toward, 1 (sweep distance)

EAT YOUR HEART OUT

Down, Down, Toward, Away, 4

STAGE FATALITY

Up, Up, Away, 3

Best Matchup

Kano's best matchup is against Sheeva. Kano has an answer to just about every one of Sheeva's special moves. If she tries a Ground Pound or Fireball, he can punish with a Down Ball on reaction. If she tries a Jump Stomp, Kano can simply do his Up Ball and it will knock her clean out of the sky. He can keep her at bay with his Knife Throw to an annoying degree and can punish her with a Ball or Up Ball (depending on how far she is) if she tries to jump over the knives. Keeping Sheeva at bay and punishing her with special moves builds Kano's meter pretty quickly and increases his chances of landing an X-Ray. It's just an all-around bad matchup for Sheeva.

Worst Matchup

Kano doesn't have too many bad matchups, but the one he does struggle with is Smoke. Smoke has the fastest Teleport attack in the game and it's the only clear-cut counter for Kano's Knife Throw. Another surefire counter for Kano's Knife Throw is the Shake parry attack, which instantly punishes Kano from full-screen distance. Smoke also has one of the fastest projectiles in the game (much faster than Kano's), which is the Smoke Bomb. The fact that Kano's projectile can be countered and he can't win a firefight with Smoke forces him to come forward. And the more Kano tries to attack in close quarters, the more opportunities Smoke will have to land his Vibration parry, which works like a charm against an opponent anxious to close the distance and score damage after losing a projectile war. Kano has to be smart in this bout or else he can lose without much effort on Smoke's end.

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KITANA

Bio

Over 10,000 years old, Princess Kitana remembers little of her early years. Her mother, Queen Sindel, died mysteriously ages ago in Earthrealm. Most of her life she has loyally served her father, Shao Kahn, in his unending quest to conquer the realms. With her closest friend, Jade, Kitana enforces her father's brutal will. But there is a feeling tugging at her, a feeling that the life she has known is a deception. For the moment, Kitana dutifully works to ensure Outworld's victory in this latest *Mortal Kombat* tournament. If she were to lower her guard, however, she might discover that her Earthrealm opponents can lead her to answers.

General Strategies

Kitana's main offensive attacks revolve around her 2, 1, Cutting Fan up close. She can keep most of the cast out with a combination of spacing from incessant Fan Tosses in the air and on the ground. If one of them connects, she has a plethora of options to juggle an opponent; her X-Ray Attack can be done if an opponent is airborne because it looks like a normal set of fans being tossed. If an airborne Fan Toss hits an opponent, you can immediately follow that up with an X-Ray Attack for easy damage.

In addition, Cutting Fan, which already has amazing recovery and speed, causes your opponent to stagger, allowing you to mix high and low games afterward. You can also throw in Kitana's Fan Dice if you have built up enough Super Meter and your opponent has a habit of attempting an attack after the Cutting Fan. The Fan Dice hits twice and knocks your opponent down, allowing Kitana to keep the pressure on. Kitana is at her deadliest in the corner; her classic jump kick, Fan Toss, juggle of your choice, and Square Boost are still intact, but she can get over 25 hits on an opponent in the corner if you have built up enough Super Meter.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Kitana	139	6.5	6.5	5.5	4	5.5	5.5	4.5	5	5	X	4.5	5.5	4.5	4	6	6	4	5	5	6	4	6	5	4	5.5	5	5	6

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Basic Moves

Away + 1

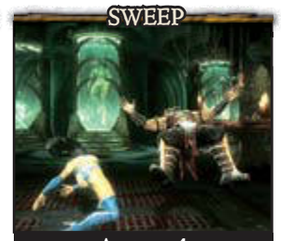
Away + 2
You can combo this move into Kitana's Air Fan Toss.

Away + 3

Toward + 2

Toward + 3

Toward + 4



Away + 4

Chain Combos

1, 1, 2

Away + 1, 2
The second hit of this chain hits overhead.

2, 1, 2

Toward + 2, 1

3, 3, 3

Away + 3, 3

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POWER INTRUSION

Toward + 3, 1, 2

DEADLY RUSH

Toward + 4, 1
The second hit of this chain hits overhead.

PURE KICKS

Toward + 4, 3

DECEPTION

Toward + 4, Away + 4

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

TRUTH BE TOLD

Toward + 2, 3, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

EFFORTLESS

Toward + 3, 1, 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

BIG FAN

Away, Away + 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

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Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

PRETTY PRINCESS

Away + 1, Tag

MESMERIZING

2, 1, Tag

MAGNIFICENT

3, 3, Tag

DISRESPECT

Toward + 3, 1, Tag

Special Moves

FAN TOSS

Down, Toward, 1 (can be done in the air)

This move can be performed at any point during Kitana's jump, meaning you can do it very low to the ground to make it hard for an opponent to advance. When performed on the ground, it covers a good amount of horizontal space, making it hard to jump over.

SQUARE BOOST

Down, Away, 1 (can be done in the air)

This works as an anti-air and is a great follow-up after landing an air Fan Toss.

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UPRAISE

This is a good anti-air that leaves the opponent airborne to be juggled with whatever follow-up you want, such as Square Boost or Jump Kick comboed into an air Fan Toss. The Upraise can also be comboed off of any chain.

Away, Away, 2

CUTTING FAN

This works as a staggering attack when landed, which can leave the opponent guessing what you're going to follow up with (a jumping attack, a low attack, or even another Cutting Fan). It also recovers fairly fast, so you can heavily pressure an opponent with this move.

Down, Toward, 2

PRETTY KICK

Down, Away, 3

This is a stylish way to end a combo, but by itself it is easily avoided by a simple duck. Only use this in a combo or if you know it will connect.

FAKE OUT KICK

Down, Away, 4

The Fake Out Kick can trip your opponent up in the middle of a chain combo by hitting them low, and it can reap the benefits of an opponent looking to duck under the Pretty Kick (thanks to the Pretty Kick and the Fake Out Kick having the same start-up animation).

Enhanced Moves

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

CHARGED FAN

Down, Toward, 1 + Block (hold 2 to charge)

This works like the Fan Toss, only this version can be charged for a delayed second hit or canceled out of by dashing forward or backward.

UPLIFT

Away, Away, 2 + Block

This functions like the normal version, only this has almost no windup, making it active instantly. Uplift is a great wake-up move.

FAN DICE

Down, Toward, 2 + Block

If the pressure from her normal Cutting Fan attack isn't enough, this version delivers an extra two hits (as well as extra damage), just in case your opponent wants to jump away or attack you in between your Cutting Fan pressure.

SQUARE WAVE

Down, Away, 1 + Block (can be done in the air)

This works like the normal version but deals more damage.

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PRETTY LEGS

Down, Away, 3 + Block

Use this in conjunction with the Pretty Kick, as it sneaks in one extra hit to stop an opponent from punishing you after they duck the initial two hits of the Pretty Kick.

Wake-Up Moves

UPRAISE

Away, Away, 2

CUTTING FAN

Down, Toward, 2

SQUARE BOOST

Down, Away, 2 (can be done in the air)

PRETTY KICK

Down, Away, 3

FAKE OUT KICK

Down, Away, 4

X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

BIG FAN (CAN BE DONE IN THE AIR)

3 + 4 + Block simultaneously or LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

This is a unique X-Ray Attack because you can perform it in the air. This means you can combo it off of jump attacks or Kitana's Air Fan Toss, and you can do it by itself very low to the ground (since it can be done at any point during her jump). Add the convenience of being able to combo into it off of almost all her chains and you've got a recipe for danger.

Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (3 HITS)

Jump kick, Air Fan, dash in, Uppercut

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COMBO B (4 HITS)

2, 1, Upraise, Square Boost

COMBO C (5 HITS)

Toward + 2, 1, 1, 1, 2

Expert Combos

COMBO A (9 HITS)

Toward + 3, 1, Upraise, Jump Kick, Air Fan, Jump Punch, Jump Kick, Air Fan

COMBO B (9 HITS)

Jump punch, 2, 1 Charged Fan, Charged Fan Cancel, dash in, 3, 3, Pretty Legs

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COMBO C (11 HITS)

Toward + 4, 1, dash in, Away + 3, 3, Upraise, dash in, Jump Kick, Air Fan, dash in, Jump Kick, Charged Air Fan, Charged Air Fan Cancel, Cutting Fan

Finishing Moves

FAN OPENER

Down, Down, Away, Toward, 2

SPLITTING HEADACHE
Toward, Down, Toward, Away, 3

STAGE FATALITY
Forward, Down, Down, 3

Best Matchup

Out of all the cast, Kitana gives the most trouble to Baraka. There is simply not much he can do to deal with the Air Fan Toss when it is performed at low heights. His projectile recovery is slow and Kitana recovers fast after an Air Fan. This allows for Kitana to throw an Air Fan while Baraka throws a Spark, hit him (while he's recovering), and still be able to duck his projectile. When in close, Kitana can apply pressure with the Cutting Fan and Pretty Kick with no thread of a Chop Chop due to it's long start-up animation. Also, Kitana's Attack 2 (which can lead to sizeable combos via chains) can punish Baraka's Blade Charge if blocked. Baraka can put up a fight, but he really can only do so much against Kitana.

Worst Matchup

Stylistically, Kitana doesn't match up very well with Smoke. Kitana, at her most effective, is far away when utilizing her Air Fan Toss or in close applying pressure with her Cutting Fan. Smoke completely nullifies these options due to his parry (Shake), which punishes any projectile from full screen, and his enhanced parry (Vibration), which punishes any attack in close quarters. With Kitana becoming hesitant to throw any projectiles, Smoke incorporates Smoke Cloud, which is very fast and is one of the best moves in the game to strike an opponent who is second-guessing whether they should attack. This match has to be fought very methodically and safe, and even then it's still a tough task for the Princess of Edenia.

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KRATOS

Bio

Ancient Greece knew no more bloodthirsty a warrior than Kratos, who for a time was the God of War. Mortal once more, Kratos withdrew from the ages-old clash between men and gods. But his solitude was broken when he was ripped through space and time. As the madness subsided, Kratos found himself in present-day Outworld, kneeling before Shao Kahn. To ensure his victory in Mortal Kombat, the emperor had invoked an ancient ritual, sacrificing the souls of his vanguard to summon and enslave the most powerful warrior of all time. But the spell alone could not contain Kratos, who soon re-gained his free will. Enraged by Shao Kahn's arrogance, Kratos vowed to rip the warlord's spine from his body. The God of War had returned to battle.

General Strategies

The God of War is no slouch when it comes to brute strength, which trumps his lack of speed. His Away + 2 Pop-Up attack can lead to standard juggle attacks such as 1, 1, 2, or he can use his follow-up attack (holding 2 after the initial Away + 2 hit) and do a considerable amount of damage. Low Kick cancels into a Head of Helios which can stun and stagger an opponent if they are not ducking, and you can use his Away + 2 pop-up afterward for even sillier damage. The Apollo's Bow is a fast, damaging projectile that hits twice, has very fast recovery, and allows Kratos to do well in projectile battles. The enhanced version allows for three projectiles to be on screen at once, but all of them can be blocked high. If this isn't enough, good luck jumping at Kratos; his uppercut is one of the best in the game.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Kratos (PS3)	107	4.5	5	5	4	4	4	2	3	4	4	3	4	4	3	5	5	3	4	4	4.5	3	5	4	4	4	4	4	X

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Basic Moves

Chain Combos

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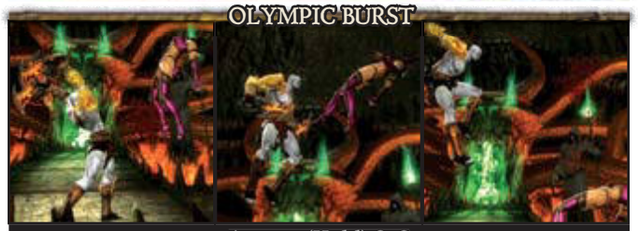
ATHENA'S FURY

2, 1, 2

OLYMPIC ASCENSION

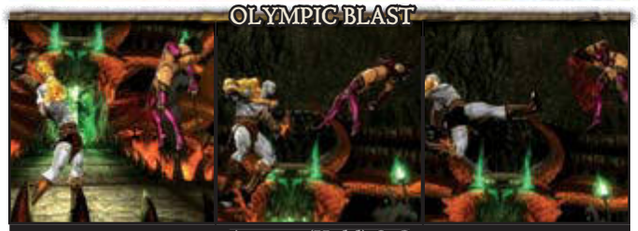
Away + (Hold) 2, 1

OLYMPIC BURST



Away + (Hold) 2, 2

OLYMPIC BLAST



Away + (Hold) 2, 3

OLYMPIC TOSS

Away + (Hold) 2, 4

ACHILLES STRIKE

Toward + 2, 2, 1

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

ATHENA'S RAGE

2, 1, 2, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

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OLYMPIC CHAIN

Away + 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

PANDORA'S BOX

Toward + 4, 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

HERCULES RUSH

1, 1, Tag

ATHENA'S PAIN

2, 1, Tag

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Special Moves

APOLLO'S BOW

Down, Toward, 2

This is a great projectile. It hits twice, has good speed, and very good recovery.

HEAD OF HELIOS

Down, Away, 2

This move leaves the opponent staggered and open for whichever combo you'd like to follow up with. It makes for an excellent chain combo ender.

HERMES DASH

Away, Toward, 4 (hold 4 to charge)

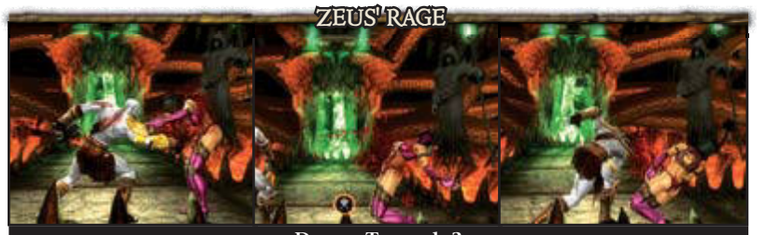
This move works great as a flashy juggle combo ender. The more effective function of this attack is that you can cancel out of it by dashing toward or backward. Use this to keep an opponent wondering if Kratos will commit to performing the Hermes Dash or not. It's during that moment of hesitation that Kratos can mount an offense, such as his 1, 1, 2 chain combo into another Hermes Dash Cancel.

GOLDEN FLEECE

Down, Away, 1

This is a parry maneuver that knocks the opponent backward onto the floor when landed. If timed right, Kratos can dash out of the parry before he hits the opponent and can follow up with any combo you'd like instead of settling for the standard knockdown.

ZEUS' RAGE



Down, Toward, 3

This immensely gratifying attack is unique in that, when landed, it greets the player with a brief button prompt that you have to match in order for the move to land the full amount of hits; for example, if it shows Attack 1, you have to press Attack 1 for the extra hit. It almost never shows the same command twice, so pay attention!

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Enhanced Moves

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

Apollo's Inferno

This fires three arrows instead of two and at three heights (one low, one mid, and one high), which makes it great for juggling and for keeping an opponent at bay. It also does a good deal of damage.

Helios Flash

Down, Away, 2 + Block

This move has a very large radius, which is good, but the wind-up is extremely slow. This makes it impossible to combo into and hard to time in the heat of battle. The best time to use this move is when an opponent is getting up off the ground.

Argo's Ram

Down, Away, 1 + Block

This functions just like the Golden Fleece, only this version pops the opponent up, leaving them open for any juggle combo Kratos wants to use, such as 2, 1 comboed into Apollo's Inferno.

Hermes Rush

Away, Toward, 4 + Block (hold 4 to charge)

This functions just like the normal version but deals more damage.

Revenge of Olympus

Down, Toward, 3 + Block

This works like the normal version, only this version requires you to enter one extra button command for an extra hit and more damage.

Wake-Up Moves

Hermes Dash

Away, Toward, 4 (hold 4 to charge)

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GOLDEN FLEECE

Down, Away, 1

HEAD OF HELIOS

Down, Away, 2

Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

Head of Helios, Dash in, Toward + 2, 2, 1

COMBO B (5 HITS)

Jump Punch, 2, 1, Apollo's Bow

COMBO C (6 HITS)

2, Head of Helios, Dash in, Away + 2 (hold 2), 2

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Expert Combos

COMBO A (8 HITS)

Jump Punch, 2, 1, Head of Helios, Dash in, Toward + 4, 2 (hold 2), 4

COMBO B (8 HITS)

Jump Punch, 2, 1, 2, Revenge of Olympus (complete the two extra hits)

COMBO C (12 HITS)

Jump Punch, 2, 1, Head of Helios, Dash in, Toward + 4, 2, Dash in, 1, 1, Revenge of Olympus (complete the extra 2 hits)

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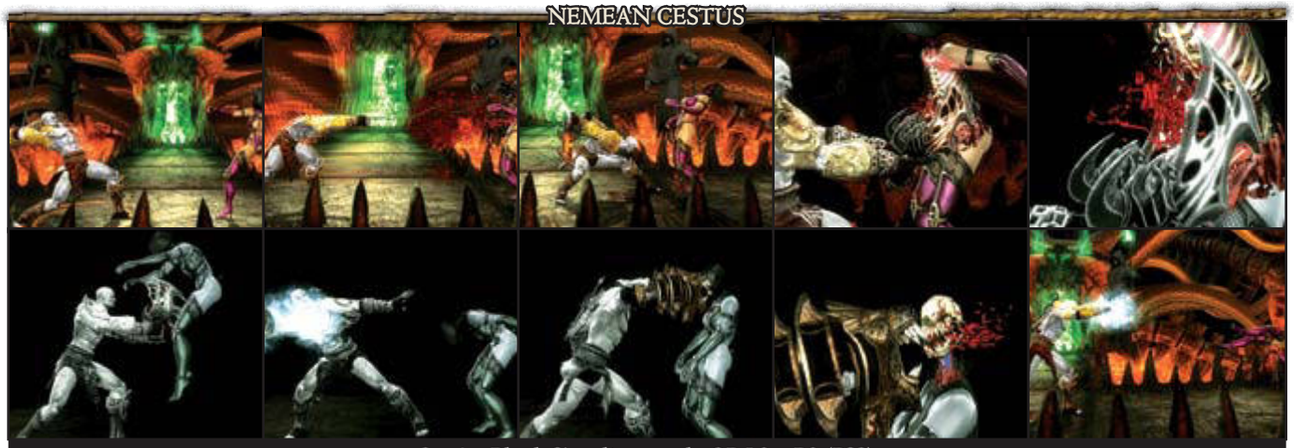
X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

NEMEAN CESTUS



3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR L2 + R2 (PS3)

Kratos's X-Ray is pretty flexible, as it can be used in a chain combo, in a juggle, or in a fireball fight. It reaches pretty far and covers ground very fast. Because of the combination of speed and distance, you can land it in unconventional ways such as after a successful juggle into Apollo's Bow; it seems like they're too far, but dash once and perform the X-Ray. It will connect cleanly.

Finishing Moves

BLADE OF OLYMPUS

Down, Down, Away, Toward, 2 (sweep distance)

MEDUSA'S GAZE

Down, Away, Down, Toward, 1

STAGE FATALITY

Down, Down, Forward, 3

Best Matchup

Kratos' best matchup is probably against Cyber Sub-Zero. Neither character poses an overwhelming threat to each other, but Kratos' better projectile game and better X-Ray attack give him the nod over Cyber Sub. Kratos can do a good job of zoning Cyber Sub by using Apollo's Bow and Apollo's Inferno. If you apply enough projectile pressure, it will become easier to read when Cyber Sub attempts a far Divekick and you can counter it with the Golden Fleece. Dash canceling out of the Hermes Dash will also make Cyber Sub hesitant about throwing any Ice Bombs due to the possibility of being hit while throwing the bomb. This matchup is not without tact on either end, but Kratos comes out on top.

Worst Matchup

Kratos' worst matchup is probably Johnny Cage. Kratos has the second slowest set of moves next to Sheeva, and quick characters who are good in close quarters can really pour it on the slower members of the cast. Cage is relentless when he is in close, applying pressure with his Toward + 3, 2, 1 chain; his Toward + 4 overhead attack; and his Sweep. Kratos can parry with his Golden Fleece, but due to Kratos' limited options when being attacked in close quarters, it can become very easy for Cage to predict when Kratos wants (or needs) to parry and punish it accordingly. On top of this match being dominated up close by Cage, he also matches Kratos from a distance. Cage's Double Low Ball is effective against everybody, including Kratos. This match can be very nerve-racking for the God of War, as one moment of lost focus can lead to being forced into turtle mode.

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KUNG LAO

Bio

Kung Lao's ancestor was defeated by Goro 500 years ago in the pivotal match that saw Shang Tsung attain control of the Mortal Kombat tournament. To him, this contest is about more than EarthRealm's freedom. His life's goal has been to slay Goro and win the tournament, thus restoring his family's honor. After being defeated by Liu Kang in a qualifying bout, he disguised himself as one of Shang Tsung's guards to gain admittance into the tournament. Kung Lao believes he is ready for the challenge. The time to avenge his ancestor is at hand.

General Strategies

Kung Lao maintains his ability to smother an opponent offensively and is quite possibly the most annoying character in the game to fight against. Kung Lao's Spin and Wake-Up Spin are relentless and almost always safe. You can juggle consistently after any successful Spin, and the invincibility on the Wake-Up Spin makes it extremely difficult to get near a high-level Kung Lao player because his juggles are highly dangerous. The Ground Hat is another quick striking move that requires the opponent to block down, which is interesting because in the older games (before *Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance*), you were able to block low projectiles by simply holding Block. The requirement is now to hold Block AND either Down/Back, Down, or Down/Toward. Staple combos and setups involve intentionally missing Dive Kicks to get close into 2, 1, 2, 1, 2 and keeping up the pressure with a Spin if your opponent flinches.

Another tricky move, the Teleport Throw, can only be stopped if you are ducking or have moved out of the way, but it is a good tactic if you are trying to keep away from an offensive-minded opponent. The vast majority of Kung Lao's bread-and-butter combos begin from his Spin, which can lead to some silly juggle strings, including the ability to perform up to three Dive Kicks in succession, leading to the corner for even more wild mix-ups and mind games.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Kung lao	159	6.5	7	7	5.5	6	6	5	6	6	5.5	X	6	6	5	6	7	5	5.5	5.5	6	4.5	7	5.5	5.5	6	5.5	5.5	7

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Basic Moves

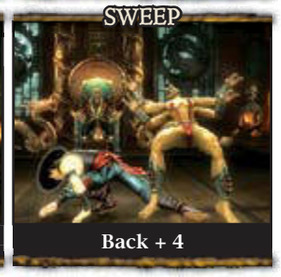
Away + 1

Toward + 2 This attack hits overhead.

Away + 3

Toward + 3

Toward + 4



Back + 4

Chain Combos

1, 1, 2, 1

Away + 1, Toward + 1

Away + 3, 3, 3

2, 1, 2, 1, 2 (must be pressed rapidly)

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IRON BROOM

2, 4, 2 + 1 The last hit of this chain hits overhead.

LEG BAR

2, 4, 1 + 3

UPROOTING STEP

2, 4, 1 + 3, 4 (small window for last input)

PLUM FLOWER

2, 4, 1 + 3, 1 (small window for last input)

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

SPINOUT

Down, Toward + 1, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

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Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

Yin Yang

1, 1, 2, Tag

Swirling Dragon

2, 1, 2, 1, 2, Tag

Double Yang

2, 4, Tag

Special Moves

Hat Toss

Away, Toward, 2 (Up and Down controls trajectory of hat)

This is the classic Hat Toss that you can control by holding Up (to curve up, meeting an airborne opponent) or Down (to curve down, meeting a ducking opponent).

Ground Hat

Down, Away, 2

This move hits low and travels across the full screen. Kung Lao has no chain combos that end in a low attack, so incorporating the Ground Hat in the middle (or at the end) of a chain combo is a sneaky way to hit an opponent low while they are blocking your chain high.

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SPIN

Down, Toward, 1

This is a pop-up move that is great both on offense and defense. It's blazing fast, will beat any attack up close, and is safe from retaliation from just about anything if blocked (making it an excellent wake-up attack as well). However, don't get too generous with it (especially on wake-up). If the move whiffs, it can be punished badly.

DIVE KICK

Down + 4 (while in the air)

This is a very quick and deceptive move. It can be used to cover ground from far away (and to land close to someone after knocking them down) or to punish projectile attempts from afar. You can perform it at any point during a jump, so it's easy to throw off an opponent's timing if they try to knock your standard jump attacks out of the air. This move is also great for juggling after a Spin.

TELEPORT

Down, Up, then 1 Throw, 2 Pop-Up Punch, 3 Standard Kick, 4, Knockdown Kick

This move is very sneaky since you can perform it at any point during a jump. Like the Dive Kick, it can be used to throw off an opponent's natural tendency to knock Kung Lao out of the air. The throw (Attack 1) after Teleport works wonders when the opponent is expecting a Jump Kick or Dive Kick.

ENHANCED MOVES

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

ULTIMATE HAT

Away, Toward, 2 + Block

This move is best used to juggle the opponent, since it causes a stun reaction (which while airborne, leaves the opponent vulnerable to attack). To get the most out of this move, use it after landing a Spin.

GRINDING HAT

Down, Away, 2 (hold 2 to delay)

This move is unique in that you can keep it stuck on the ground by holding 2 and can control the trajectory. To make it fly toward your opponent's head, hold Down while releasing 2. To make it fly almost vertical in front of you (for an opponent jumping in), hold Up while releasing 2. An added benefit is that while Kung Lao has the hat stuck on the ground, he's free to move wherever he likes as long as he keeps holding 2. Perform a Jump Kick while having a hat stuck to the ground; then let go of the hat right after landing the Jump Kick (this effectively forces them to block the hat).

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CYCLONE

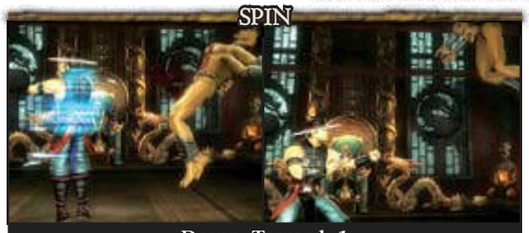
Down, Toward, 1 + Block
This version of the Spin allows for more hits and more damage but makes the opponent fall faster.

MULTI KICK

Down + 4 + Block (while in the air)
This version of the Dive Kick allows for more hits and more damage.

Wake-Up Moves

SPIN



Down, Toward, 1

TELEPORT

Down, Up

Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

2, 4, Spin, Jump Kick, Dive Kick

COMBO B (5 HITS)

Away 3, 3, 3, Ultimate Hat, dash in, Uppercut

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COMBO C (8 HITS)

Jump punch, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2 (must be pressed rapidly), 1 + 2

Expert Combos

COMBO A (8 HITS)

Jump Kick, Multi Kick, dash in, 2, 4, 1 + 2, 2

COMBO C (15 HITS)

Jump punch, 1, 1, 2, Spin, dash in, 1, dash in 1, 1, 2, Ultimate Hat, dash in 1, Jump Kick, Multi Kick

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COMBO B (10 HITS)

2, 1, 2, 1, 2 (must be pressed rapidly), Spin, Jump Punch, Jump Kick, Teleport, Teleport Slam

X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

FIST OF SHAOLIN

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

This X-Ray Attack is very easy to land, as it functions almost the same as Kung Lao's Spin move. It is very fast, beats anything close, and is great on wake-up. You can also combo off of any chain combo and perform it in the middle of a juggle. Not only that, but Kung Lao's X-Ray leaves the opponent airborne for a split second, where they're open for moves such as a Ground Hat or even a Dive Kick if you're fast enough to perform it!

Finishing Moves

HAT TRICK

Back, Toward, Toward, Back, 2

RAZOR'S EDGE
Down, Down, Forward, Back, 1

STAGE FATALITY
Down, Forward, Down, 3

Best Matchup

Kung Lao is a very overwhelming character at his best, and not many people feel the applied pressure more than Sheeva. Kung Lao can terrorize her by comboing his Chained Fists into the Spin (which she cannot punish and is blocked due to her slow attacks), but he can punish Sheeva's Ground Pound with a dive kick from almost full-screen distance. In addition, he can counter her Jump Stomp clean (on reaction) with his Spin. If she manages to get Kung Lao off her and decides to throw a projectile, he's got the answer to that as well via his Teleport Throw. With options up close and from a distance, fighting Kung Lao is a very trying experience for Sheeva any way you slice it.

Worst Matchup

Out of everyone in the cast, Kung Lao has the most trouble with Shang Tsung. This is mainly due to Shang's Up Skull being too fast for Kung Lao to counter with Teleport. Furthermore, the Up Skull has three distances, which can confuse Kung Lao if he intends on countering with a Dive Kick (as he could potentially dive right into the way of a cleverly placed Up Skull). Naturally, once Kung Lao decides to briefly stay on the ground to gather himself, out comes Shang Tsung's Triple Skulls, which pushes Kung Lao back to full screen and back to the drawing board.

Shang doesn't have many other attacks that give Kung Lao much trouble, but the projectile prowess of Shang Tsung is enough to make anyone apprehensive. Kung Lao is no exception.

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LIU KANG

Bio

Orphaned at a very young age, Liu Kang was raised by Shaolin monks, who taught him the way of the spiritual warrior. They soon recognized his potential as a contender for the Mortal Kombat tournament and rigorously trained him for this task. Raiden, too, understood that Liu Kang was EarthRealm's best hope for freedom and introduced him to Master Bo' Rai Cho to further his development. Once fully trained, Liu Kang bested all challengers and earned the high honor of representing the Shaolin in the Mortal Kombat tournament. He and Raiden then embarked on their fateful journey to Shang Tsung's island to compete in this pivotal kontest.

General Strategies

Liu Kang is one of the fastest characters in the game, if not *the* fastest. Liu Kang has it all—high projectiles, low projectiles, air projectiles, and a high/low mix-up from a combo starter with his Away + 3, 1, 2 chain combo, which can be juggled across the screen. Liu Kang's Air Fireball can be done faster by jumping Up/Back and pressing Down/Toward and Attack 1, giving him the ability to throw fireballs instantaneously in the air. Mix-up games from his 2, 1, 3 can be followed up (but not as a combo) with a Sweep, Dragon Stance into a Final Act pop-up, or a Toward + 2 attack that looks ambiguous but can be blocked either high or low. Interesting mix-up games can be done by pressing Away + 2. Away + 3 is a decent high/low mix-up, and using 1, 2, Away + 1 can set up some very deadly mid-screen juggles. Another excellent pop-up chain where the last hit is overhead is 2, 1, 3. Liu also can throw his Air Fireball instantly off the ground by jumping Up/Back and pressing Toward and Attack 1 in the air.

Annoyed by players jumping at you all the time? Not with Liu Kang—he has an excellent uppercut that will catch everyone off guard. The only thing Liu Kang really has to worry about are teleporting characters, because it can be very easy to get caught tossing projectiles based on the ease of use and high probabilities many of them will hit your opponent. With all of these tools and abilities, it's no surprise Liu Kang is one of the most complete fighters in the game.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Liu Kang	142	6.5	6.5	5.5	4.5	5.5	5	4.5	5	5	4.5	4	X	5.5	4	6	7	4.5	4.5	5	6	4.5	7	4.5	5	5	6	5	6

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Basic Moves

Chain Combos

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2, 1, 3 The last hit of this chain hits overhead.

Toward + 2, 4

Away + 2, Away + 3

Away + 2, 3

Toward + 4, 3
The first hit of this chain hits low.

3, 3, 4

Away + 3, 1, 2 The first hit of this chain hits low.

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

1, 2, Away + 1, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

Away + 3, 1, 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

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NEXT TIME

1 (from Dragon Stance), Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

SHAOLIN STEP

2, 1, 3, Tag

Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

FIST SWAPS

1, 1, Tag

FRIENDLY

Toward + 1, 2, Tag

STEP-IN

1, 2, Tag

DRAGON DANCE

2, 1, Tag

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TWIN LOTUS

3, 3, Tag

HARM-ONIOUS

Away + 3, 1, Tag

SPECIAL MOVES

HIGH FIREBALL

Away, Toward, 1 (can be done in the air)

A solid projectile with good speed and good recovery. This move is very effective when performed in the air, as close to the ground as possible in a consistent manner so that it is hard for the opponent to advance forward.

LOW FIREBALL

Away, Toward, 3

This move hits low, so a good way to start landing it is to pester the opponent with his Toward + 3 overhead attack and 2, 1, 3 chain combo to get them blocking high. Then when they least expect it, combo a chain into the Low Fireball. This is also one of the best projectiles from a distance since it naturally ducks under most projectiles in a firefight.

FLYING DRAGON KICK

Away, Toward, 2

This move is pretty fast but is punished horribly if it's blocked or whiffed. It's a great chain combo and juggle ender. And it can most certainly score in the clutch if both players are on danger (low on health to the point where one blocked attack can kill you).

BICYCLE KICK

Away, Away, Toward, 4

This is another move that works great as a chain or juggle ender but is punished severely when blocked. It's a fancy-looking and gratifying move, but only use this move when it's guaranteed to hit.

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PARRY

This move parries any attack and knocks the opponent to the ground. This works as a good anti-air and as a wake-up attack.

Down, Away, 1

Enhanced Moves

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

HIGH DRAGON FIRE

Away, Toward, 1 + Block (can be done in the air)
This works just like the normal version except for a bump in damage.

LOW DRAGON FIRE

Away, Toward, 3 + Block
Same as the normal one, but deals more damage.

FLAME DRAGON KICK

Away, Toward, 2 + Block
This functions just like the regular Dragon Kick, but deals more damage.

BICYCLE STEPS

Away, Away, Toward, 4 + Block
This version of the Bicycle Kick manages to look even flashier than the normal one, thanks to an eye-pleasing fire effect, and it deals significantly more damage.

BURNING PARRY

This works the same as the normal Parry, but this one pops the opponent up, leaving them open for whichever juggle combo you'd like. Liu Kang's Toward + 2, 3 works perfectly in this situation.

Down, Away, 1 + Block

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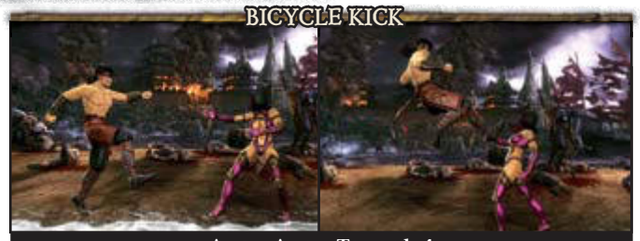
Wake-Up Moves

FLYING DRAGON KICK

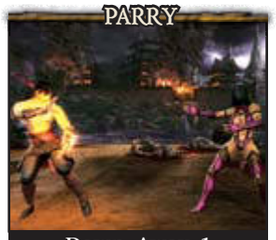
Away, Toward, 2

BICYCLE KICK



Away, Away, Toward, 4

PARRY



Down, Away, 1

LOW FIREBALL

Away, Toward, 3

Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

Jump Punch, Away + 2, Toward + 1, Knife Throw

COMBO B (4 HITS)

Away + 1, 1, 2, Up Ball

COMBO C (5 HITS)

2, 1, 2, Air Throw

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Expert Combos

COMBO A (7 HITS)

Jump Punch, Away + 1, 1, 2, Dash in, Toward + 1, 1 Kano Choke

COMBO B (8 HITS)

Jump Punch, 2, 1, 2, Jump kick Downward Ball

COMBO C (11 HITS)

Jump Punch, Away + 1, 1, 2, Dash in, 2, 1, 2, Jump Kick, Downward Ball

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

CHIN UP

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

Liu Kang may not be able to combo any of his chains into his X-Ray attack, but he can land it in juggle combos. For example, after Kang's 2, 1, 3 chain, the opponent is at the perfect height to do 1, 1 into his X-Ray. Another example is after his Away + 3, 1, 2 chain, he can dash in and do his Toward + 2, 4 chain into the X-Ray. Liu Kang's X-Ray is unique in that it leaves the opponent falling from the sky, which leaves them open for more juggles such as a Jump Kick into Air High Fireball on their way down.

Finishing Moves

FIST OF FLAME

Toward, Away, Down, Down, 3 (sweep distance)

THE BEAST WITHIN

Down, Down, Toward, Down, 4

STAGE FATALITY

Down, Forward, Back, 3

Best Matchup

Liu Kang's best matchup overall is probably against Cyber Sub-Zero. To put it frankly, Cyber Sub has nothing to threaten Liu Kang from a distance or in close quarters. Liu's Low Fireball goes right under Cyber Sub's Ice Ball, and he recovers too fast after an Air Fireball for Smoke to freeze him while he's airborne. If Cyber Sub wants to perform a far Divekick, he'd better not be predictable or else he runs the risk of getting countered clean with Liu's Burning Parry and popped up for his trouble. In close, Liu can take advantage of Cyber Sub's relatively slow start-up animation on his attacks and then assault him with the 2, 1, 3 and Away + 3, 1, 2 chains. Cyber Sub does have an Ice Parry, but it cannot parry low attacks, making it easier for Liu to attack him at will. This is a very trying bout for Cyber Sub.

Worst Matchup

Liu Kang is given the fight of his life when matched up against Nightwolf. This is a very competitive matchup, but Nightwolf's Reflect makes the difference in the end. When Nightwolf reflects Liu Kang's High Fireball, Liu has to either block, duck, or jump if he doesn't want to take damage. Nightwolf's Lightning hits Liu while he's ducking or blocking, and Nightwolf's Power Charge can hit Liu Kang before he hits the ground whether he jumps forward or backward. If Liu throws a Low Fireball to counter his own High Fireball being reflected back at him, he risks getting the Low Fireball reflected as well, which forces him to get out of the way and become subject to a counter from Nightwolf. This, coupled with Nightwolf's formidable projectile game, gives him the edge over the Shaolin warrior.

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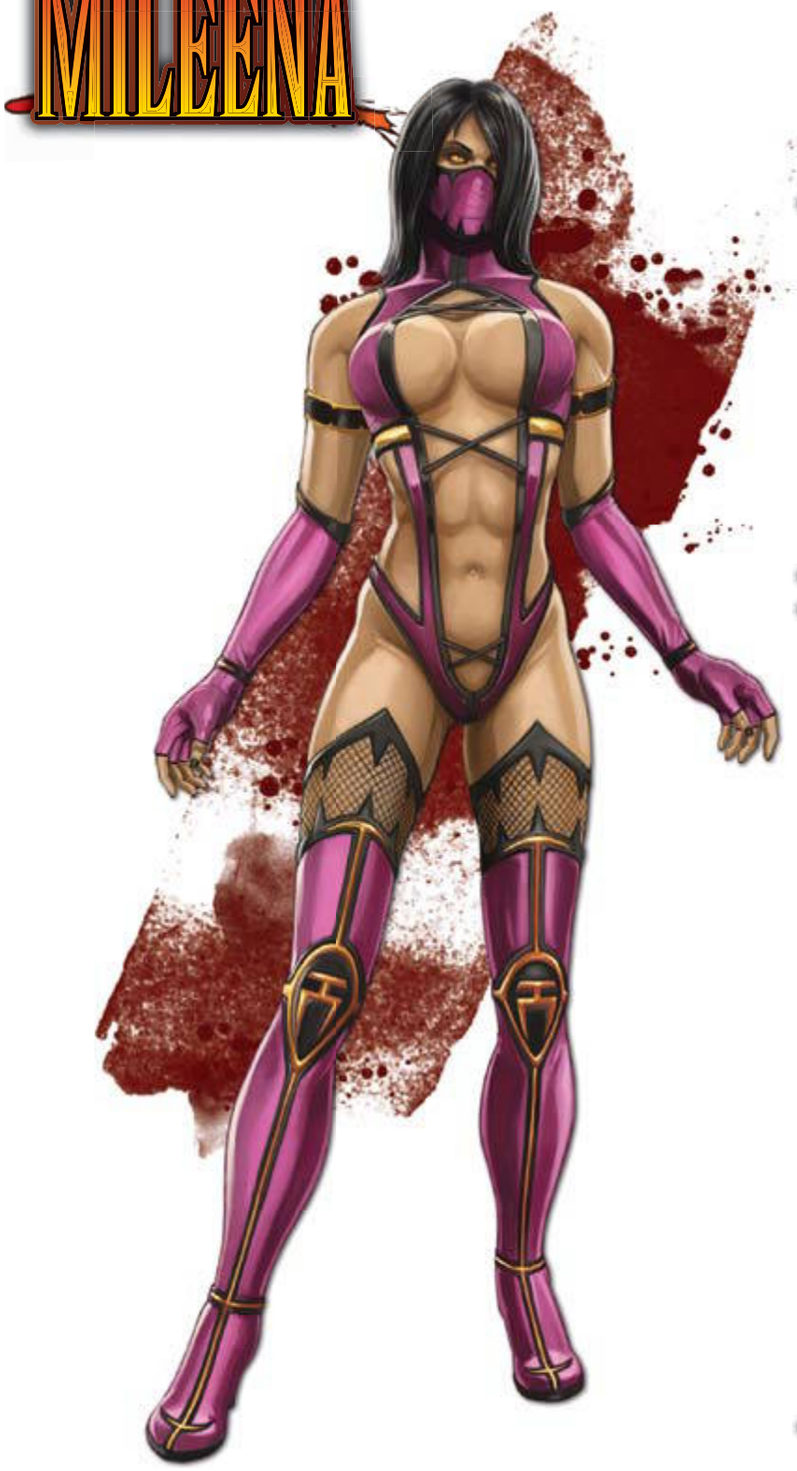
MILEENA



Bio

Shang Tsung has created many abominable creatures in his Flesh Pits, but none so twisted as Mileena. A fusion of Edenian flesh and Tarkatan blood, Mileena is both beauty and beast. This dichotomy has made her mind unstable; she is prone to fits of madness and savagery. Though she has the appearance of a mature woman, she is more child than adult—a blank slate conformed to Shao Kahn's will. Devoid of conscience or remorse, Mileena will butcher anyone to appease her beloved father.

General Strategies

Mileena's attack style is all about keep-away and safe moves. Her Teleport Drop has always been a staple of her repertoire of special moves and is best known for getting her away from projectiles; however, now you can use a "safe" method of getting in close and attacking by performing an Air Sai Burst afterward. Use the Ball Roll as a combo juggle starter. It is extremely quick, but avoid spamming it, as your opponent can block this standing up.

Mileena's mix-ups revolve around her Away + 3 and Away + 4 Sneaky Kick/Sweep low moves, but she can do some serious juggle damage by using Away + 1, 4 as a startup to a juggle combo or by utilizing Up + 4 as the starter instead. A lot of these are best done when crossing up the opponent after a jumping Attack 1 or 2, because players have a tendency to block low after the initial hit, anticipating a high/low mix-up. Mileena is one of only three characters who can cheat an air motion for a projectile by pressing Up/Back, then immediately pressing Toward + 1. This gives her an "instant" off-the-ground Air Sai, just like in the old *Mortal Kombat II* days.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Mileena	136.5	6	6	5	4.5	5.5	5	4	4.5	5	5.5	4	4.5	X	4	5	6	4.5	5	6	5.5	4	6	5	5	5	5.5	4.5	6

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Basic Moves

Chain Combos

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KILLER HEELS

3, 4

FIENDLY KISS

4, 2

GETAWAY STICKS

Away + 3, Away + 4

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

MALICE

Up + 4, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

TAG COMBOS (TAG MODE ONLY)

MALEVOLENCE

1, 1, Tag

FIENDISH

2, 3, Tag

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Special Moves

Sai Blast

Away, Toward, 1 (can be done in the air)

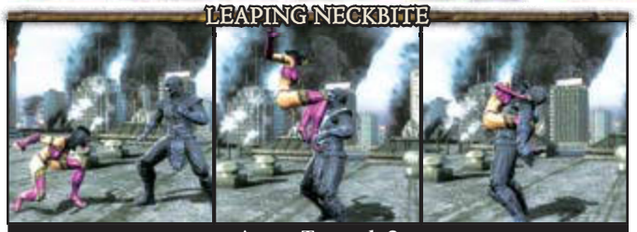
The air version of this move is great because it can be performed at any point during Mileena's jump. This means that if you're fast enough, you can fire a Sai mere inches off the ground, which is an effective way to stop an opponent from trying to close the distance.

Teleport Drop

Toward, Toward, 3 (can be done in the air)

This move can also be performed at any point during Mileena's jump, and you can combo it off of a Jump kick. What's better is that she can combo into a Sai Blast when the Teleport Drop impacts. This means you can perform a Jump Kick into a Teleport Drop into a Sai Blast. This sequence works like a charm on a popped-up opponent.

Leaping Neckbite



Away, Toward, 2

This move can serve as a great ender for juggle combos.

Ball Roll

Away, Down, 4

This move goes under just about every projectile in the game, and it's fast and pops the opponent up, leading to juggles aplenty. You can land this off of any chain combo and can even counter jumping attacks with it. In addition, you can land it by baiting your opponent into a projectile war, then dipping under it with the Ball Roll.

Enhanced Moves

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

Tricky Teleport

Toward, Toward, 3 + Block (can be done in the air)

You can use this like Mileena's normal Teleport Drop, but with the added benefit of it dropping two times from the sky instead of once. This works extremely well if your opponent wants to block a Teleport Drop and tries to punish it, as he will get hit from the other side while trying to retaliate. Similar to her normal Teleport Drop, Mileena can combo right into a Sai Blast at the point of the Tricky Teleport's second impact.

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SAI BURSTS

Away, Toward, 1 + Block (can be done in the air)
This works just like Mileena's regular Sai Blast but scores for an extra hit and extra damage.

LEAPING LUNCH

Away, Toward, 2 + Block
This functions like the normal version, just with added hits or bites and extra damage.

SMASHING ROLL

Away, Down, 4 + Block
This works like her regular Ball Roll but with a twist. The start-up animation for the Smashing Roll hits overhead. Use her sweep and Away + 3, 4 chain to get the opponent to block low; then fire this off when they least expect it.

WAKE-UP MOVES

TELEPORT DROP

Toward, Toward, 3

BALL ROLL

Away, Down, 4

X-RAY ATTACKS

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

FEMME FATALE

3 + 4 + Block simultaneously or LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)
You can combo this X-Ray Attack off of any chain and can use it within any juggle combo. It doesn't travel a far distance, but given Mileena's high chance of popping an opponent up with the Ball Roll or her Up + 4 overhead, it's one of the easier X-Ray Attacks in the game to land.

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Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (3 HITS)

Jump Kick, Air Sai Blast, dash in, Uppercut

COMBO B (4 HITS)

Jump Punch, 4, 2, Teleport Drop

COMBO C (8 HITS)

Up + 4, dash in 3, 4, Leaping Neckbite

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Expert Combos

COMBO A (9 HITS)

Up + 4, Toward + 3, 1 + 2, Ball Roll, Jump Kick, Tricky Teleport, Teleport Drop Air Sai combo into Air Sai Bursts

COMBO B (15 HITS)

Jump Punch, 2, 3, Ball Roll, Up + 4, dash in, 1, 1, 2, Leaping Lunch

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COMBO C (15 HITS)

Jump Punch, Away + 1, 4, 4, 2 Ball Roll, Toward + 3, 1 + 2, Leaping Lunch

Finishing Moves

BE MINE

Away, Toward, Away, Toward, 2

RIP OFF

Away, Toward, Away, Down, 3

STAGE FATALITY

Down, Down, Down, 1

Best Matchup

Mileena doesn't have a big enough edge over anyone in the game for a match to be completely one-sided. However, her general move set and attacks can make Scorpion have a bad night. Varying heights of her Air Sai Blast is the cornerstone to winning this match, as it tempts (and sometimes forces) Scorpion to try and counter with either a Spear or a Teleport. The Teleport is too slow to counter an Air Sai Blast performed low to the ground, and Mileena's Ball Roll goes right under the Spear, popping him up for any combo she likes. Using her Tricky Teleport after a sustained period of Air Sai Blasts works wonders due to Scorpion's anxiousness to punish a blocked Teleport Drop (leaving him open to get hit with the second hit of the Tricky Teleport). Scorpion almost never gets a chance to land a Demon Fire due to Mileena staying airborne for the majority of a match. This still remains a tactical match on both ends, but Mileena has the upper hand when it's all said and done.

Worst Matchup

Mileena's worst matchup may very well be the thunder god himself, Raiden. His teleport is the answer to any Sai Blast (air or ground). It's not necessarily a clean counter, but it instantly puts Mileena on the defensive when she lands. His Torpedo, however, is fast enough to hit her on the way down from an Air Sai Blast. Mileena can normally perform her Ball Roll to counter projectiles, but Raiden thwarts that strategy because his Bolt attack hits twice (the second hit stopping Mileena from following up the Ball Roll with a combo). Raiden can also perform an Air Torpedo to fly over Mileena's head, then Teleport behind her, just to change her directional focus and keep her guessing where Raiden will be on the screen. All in all, Raiden doesn't pose overwhelming problems for Mileena, but it's his movement generalship that gives Mileena fits over a period of time.

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NIGHTWOLF

Bio

Nightwolf is one of few EarthRealm mortals with a strong connection to the spirit world. A powerful Native American shaman, he is guided by the empyrean forces and communes with divine beings such as Haokah, known to the East as Raiden. Nightwolf's devotion allows the Spirits to work through him, granting him unnatural long life and ethereal weapons to kombat the darkness that threatens mortalkind. In the coming crisis, however, it is not Nightwolf's arsenal that will alter fate. His faith in the Spirits will inspire those who have lost hope.

General Strategies

Nightwolf can play the aggressor or the defensive force based on the fact that his Shoulder and Power Charge moves knock down and are instantaneous if anyone flinches. The Shoulder can be ducked but the Power Charge can't and is an excellent wake-up option. High/low mix-up games come into play with the Toward + 3, 1, 2 chain combo, bringing your opponent into a juggle state. This can be followed up with the juggle of your choice. Another suitable chain up close is 1, 2, 2, 1. Other defensive mix-ups involve a successful Shoulder, then jumping or dashing backward for a Lightning (unblockable and can only be escaped by jumping) or a Thunder Storm (one bar of Super Meter), which can be followed up with a juggle attack. If an opponent jumps, Nightwolf's Uppercut is an excellent move to counter jumpers, and his Arrow Shot and enhanced Arrow Shot are also applicable in a war of projectiles.

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Nightwolf	158.5	7	8	7	5	6	6	5	6	5.5	6	5	6	6	X	4.5	7	5	5.5	5.5	6	4.5	6	6	6	5.5	5.5	6	7

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Basic Moves

Away + 1

Down + 2

Away + 2

Toward + 2

Toward + 3

Away + 4

Chain Combos

1, 1, 2 The last hit of this chain hits overhead.

1, 1, 4

1, 2, 2, 1 The third hit of this chain hits overhead.

Away + 1, 1, 1

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NEW EARTH

2, 3, 4

TOMAHAWK SMASH

Away + 2, 2, 1

FULL MOON

Toward + 3, 1, 2

SPIRIT TRACKS

Toward + 3, Away + 4

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

WANING MOON

Toward + 3, 1, 2, Tag

RISING HAWK

Down, Toward, 1, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

DIVING EAGLE

Down, Toward, 1 + Block, Tag (uses on bar of Super Meter)

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

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Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

RAZOR'S EDGE

1, 1, Tag

FALCON SWAP

1, 2, 2, Tag

DEADLY TALON

2, 3, Tag

HOWLING WOLF

Away + 2, 2, Tag

BULL AND BEAR

Toward + 3, 1, Tag

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Special Moves

Shoulder

Toward, Toward, 4

This move is very fast and effective. It can punish whiffed attacks and can serve as an ender to any chain combo or juggle; it's also a great wake-up attack. It can be ducked and punished with an Uppercut, but since the move is so fast, the opponent usually has no time to telegraph it. Performing it after an opponent blocks an Arrow Shot will hit anything your opponent will attempt to do in retaliation.

Lightning

Down, Away, 3

This move is fairly easy to react to (and jump away from) when performed, until you condition an opponent to be afraid of the Shoulder. When they are anticipating your Shoulder (in efforts to punish it), strike them with Lightning before they can stand up and jump away.

Arrow Shot

Down, Away, 1

A solid projectile with good recovery time.

Reflect

Down, Away, 2

Bait your opponent into a projectile war with Nightwolf's Arrow Shot and reap the benefits with Reflect. This move sends back from afar whatever your opponent throws and can be followed up with Arrow Shot before they have a chance to retaliate from being hit with their own projectile.

Axe Swing

Down, Toward, 1

This pops the opponent up, and you can combo it off of any chain and use it in any juggle. It also serves as a pretty good anti-air attack.

Choke

Down, Toward, 2

This move is gratifying but unsafe. It's best used within a chain combo.

Enhanced Moves

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

Strangle

Down, Toward, 2 + Block

Even more gratifying than the Choke but just as risky to use by itself.

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POWER CHARGE

Toward, Toward, 4 + Block

One of the best enhanced moves in the game, the Power Charge is as fast as Nightwolf's normal Shoulder, but travels full screen and hits twice. The killer is the second hit of the Power Charge hitting overhead. This beats the natural tendency of an opponent to duck the Shoulder and puts them on their behind, setting them up for things like his Lightning.

THUNDER STORM (JUGGLES)

Down, Away, 3 + Block

This move works just like the normal Lightning but with the added benefit of covering more real estate and popping the opponent up for a juggle. Nightwolf's Shoulder attacks are a perfect follow-up to the Thunder Storm if landed from a distance.

MULTI-ARROW

Down, Away, 1 + Block

This move hurls three arrows instead of one, making it almost impossible to jump over, and deals more damage.

ABSORB

Down, Away, 2 + Block

Use this just like you'd use the Reflect but with the intention of boosting your health. This move literally absorbs any projectile and restores a nice chunk of Nightwolf's life bar. Used in moderation with his Reflect, Nightwolf is almost impossible to beat in a projectile fight.

TOMAHAWK BASH

Down, Toward, 1 + Block

This works just like the normal Tomahawk but with added damage and an extra hit.

WAKE-UP MOVES

SHOULDER

Toward, Toward, 4

REFLECT

Down, Away, 2

AXE SWING

Down, Toward, 1

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Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (5 HITS)

Toward + 3, 1, Axe Swing, 1, Arrow Shot

COMBO B (5 HITS)

Jump Punch, 1, 2, Night Choke

COMBO C (6 HITS)

Away + 1, 1, 1, Power Charge

Expert Combos

COMBO A (8 HITS)

Toward + 3, 1, Axe Swing, 1, 1 Arrow Shot, Power Charge

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COMBO B (10 HITS)

Away + 1, 1, 1, Axe Swing, Away + 1, Tomahawk Bash, Dash in, 1, Night Choke

COMBO C (13 HITS)

Jump Punch, Toward + 3, 1, Tomahawk Bash, Away + 1, Tomahawk Bash, Dash in, 1, Strangle

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

ANCESTORS CALL

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

This X-Ray Attack travels a fairly short distance, but you can easily combo it off of Nightwolf's Tomahawk or one of his chain combos. Because it hits a ducking opponent, you can also use it against an opponent looking to duck under Nightwolf's Shoulder for a clutch victory.

Finishing Moves

LITTLE OFF THE TOP

Down, Toward, Down, Back, 4

ASCENSION

Down, Down, Forward, Back, 1

STAGE FATALITY

Down, Down, Down, Block

Best Matchup

Nightwolf's best matchup is with the reptilian ninja Reptile. Nightwolf's key to success in this bout is Reflect. Reptile at his strongest hurls projectiles as often as he can, which is to Nightwolf's advantage. Reptile's Force Ball travels at a much slower speed than most projectiles, and this makes it all the more effective when Nightwolf reflects it. This means that, from a distance, he can follow it with any special move before it reaches Reptile, putting him on the defensive. Since they are unblockable, Nightwolf's Lightning and Thunder Storm are almost a sure thing after a reflected Force Ball because of Reptile's natural tendency to block what has just been reflected back at him. If Reptile wants to jump over a reflected Force Ball, Nightwolf can time an Arrow Shot just as he leaves the ground so that he lands on the Arrow; he can then hit Reptile with the Shoulder or Power Charge before Reptile lands, pushing him back full screen. Simply put, Reptile has to abandon his projectiles, find a way in, and fight in close quarters and that's not where he is effective. Nightwolf assumes almost absolute control of space as well as the pace in this matchup.

Worst Matchup

Out of all the cast, there are only a couple people who give him problems and Noob Saibot is one of them. Noob Saibot is effective in this match because he has the only horizontal projectiles that Nightwolf can't reflect. Without any worry of reciprocation, he can work a pretty good zone game against Nightwolf and force him to come forward. The only way Nightwolf can close the distance swiftly is by performing the Shoulder, which can be easily ducked and uppercutted. Also, Noob can tempt Nightwolf to throw his projectiles by jumping away repeatedly and punish it on reaction with a Teleport Slam. This matchup doesn't exactly spell certain doom for Nightwolf, but Noob definitely makes him sing for his supper.

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NOOB

Bio

Noob Saibot's origins are unknown, but he is likely a revenant: a fallen warrior resurrected by the NetherRealm sorcerer Quan Chi to fulfill a dark objective. Noob has been assigned to aid Shao Kahn in his acquisition of EarthRealm. A faithful servant and a recent addition to the Brotherhood of Shadow, he will obey his master, Quan Chi, and complete his mission. But he is biding his time. Noob Saibot has a dark objective of his own.

General Strategies

The majority of Noob's setup attacks are to keep the opponent out with gimmicks. As a whole, Noob is not a "great" character, but he does have an arsenal of tricks that are still volatile during a match. Noob's Ghostball temporarily disables your opponent's block for a short period of time. You are unable to throw out another Ghostball for about five seconds if you successfully land a hit on your opponent. Utilizing Noob's Shadow Moves (Charge, Upknee, and Strike) as a mixture of anti-air and high/low games as well as Noob's Away + 1 creates a massive wall that makes up for Noob's lack of creative juggle combos. A good combo starter connected by Away + 1, 2, Toward + 4 keeps your opponent close if the last hit connects (low attack); this allows you to keep on pressure if you decide to play up close. Using Away + 2, 1, 2 pops up the opponent, and you can do a Ghostball that will disable blocking. This eventually leads into a free X-Ray Attack, or you can do a Teleport Slam if you want a couple of seconds while your opponent is grounded because of their inability to block. Noob's Shadow Upknee in enhanced form is a great move to juggle with, and as a wake-up attack, it is an excellent anti-air. In the corner, the Shadow Upknee mixed with Away + 1 can cause some major headaches. Easy high-level X-Ray Attack damage can be done by connecting the X-Ray Attack after Noob's Away + 1, 2, 1, 4 chain combo.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Noob	124.5	5	5.5	5	4	4	4	3.5	4	4	4	4	4	5	5.5	X	6	4	4.5	5	4.5	4.5	5	4	4.5	5.5	5	5.5	5

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Basic Moves

Away + 1

Down + 2

Away + 2

Toward + 3

Toward + 4

Away + 4

Chain Combos

2, 1

Away + 1, 2, Toward + 4

Back + 1, 2, 1, 4 The last hit of this chain hits low.

Away + 1, 2, 1, 4 The third hit of this chain hits overhead.

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2, 1, 2

Away + 2, 1, 4 The second hit of this chain hits overhead.

Toward + 3, 3, 3

Toward + 4, 3

Fast Tags (Tag Mode Only)

Away + 1, 2, 1, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

Away + 1, 2, Tag

2, 1, Tag

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TRAGIC

Away + 2, 1, Tag

THE SHADOW

Toward + 3, 3, Tag

SPECIAL MOVES

GHOSTBALL

Down, Toward, 1 (disables opponent's block)

Landing this will disable your opponent's block for about five seconds. After executing a Ghostball, it's best to perform the Teleport Slam or a Shadow Charge.

BLACKHOLE

Above: Down, Away, 2 • Behind: Down, Toward, 2 •
In Front: Down, Toward, Away 2

This move is extremely slow, but if it hits, it drops an opponent from the sky, leaving them open to be juggled.

TELEPORT SLAM

Down, Up (can be done in the air)

This can be used for a stylish combo ender, or it can be used to punish an opponent for being predictable in their projectile throwing.

SHADOW CHARGE

Down, Toward, 3

This is a very fast projectile that is one of the most annoying attacks in the game due to the suddenness and the knockdown reaction it causes when it lands.

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SHADOW UPKNEE

Down, Away, 3

This is one of the best anti-air attacks in the game. It's fast, covers a good amount of aerial real estate, and has great recovery.

SHADOW SLIDE

Away, Toward, 4

This move is as equally annoying as the Shadow Charge. It's a little slower than the Shadow Charge but it hits low.

ENHANCED MOVES

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

SPIRIT BALL

Down, Toward, 1 + Block

This move can be applied just like the normal one, only this version reverses the controls of an opponent for five seconds; this means if they want to jump, they have to press Down and if they want to walk forward, they have to press Away.

SAIBOT CHARGE

Down, Toward, 3 + Block

This functions like the normal version but deals one more hit and a little more damage.

DARKNESS

Above: Down, Away, 2 + Block • Behind: Down, Toward, 2 + Block • In Front: Down, Toward, Away 1 + Block

This works just like the normal version; it just comes out twice as fast and does a little more damage.

TELEPORT SMASH

Down, Up + Block (can be done in the air)

Use this as you would the Teleport Slam but only if you want to add flair (and more damage) by magnifying the impact of the slam.

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SAIBOT UPKNEE

Down, Away, 3 + Block

This version of the Upknee covers even more aerial real estate and pops up the opponent high enough to follow up with an attack before they hit the ground. A Shadow Charge works great after a successful Saibot Upknee.

SAIBOT SLIDE

Away, Toward, 4 + Block

This version of the Shadow Slide does a little more damage and knocks the opponent on the ground toward you. This is a prime opportunity to try landing the Ghostball as they get up.

WAKE-UP MOVES

TELEPORT SLAM

Down, Up

SHADOW CHARGE

Down, Toward, 3

SHADOW UPKNEE

Down, Away, 3

SHADOW SLIDE

Away, Toward, 4

X-RAY ATTACKS

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

TOGETHER AGAIN

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

Noob's X-Ray can be used as if it were a Teleport Punch, since it hits from behind an opponent. He can counter projectile attempts with it and can combo it off of his 2, 1, 2; his Away + 2, 1, 4; and his Away + 1, 2, 1, 4 chains. It does good damage and is fairly fast. In fact, it's just fast enough to anti-air an opponent who jumps toward you, hitting them from behind.

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Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

2, 1, 2, Shadow Slide

COMBO B (4 HITS)

Jump Punch, 1, 2, Shadow Upknee

COMBO C (4 HITS)

Away + 1, 2, 1, Ghostball

Expert Combos

COMBO A (5 HITS)

Jump Punch, 1, 2, Saibot Upknee, Saibot Charge

COMBO B (5 HITS)

Darkness, Neutral Jump Punch, Away + 2, 1, 4, Saibot Slide

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COMBO C (9 HITS)

Jump Punch, Away + 1, 2, 1, 4, Teleport Smash

FINISHING MOVES

MAKE A WISH

Away, Toward, Away, Down + 4 (one jump away from opponent)

AS ONE

Down, Down, Away, Down, Block

STAGE FATALITY

Down, Toward, Away, 3

BEST MATCHUP

Noob's best matchup might be against the mighty Nightwolf. Nightwolf is easily a more capable character and possesses a much more well-rounded move set. However, in this matchup, there is only one thing that puts this matchup in Noob's favor: Nightwolf cannot reflect Noob's Shadows. Because of this, Noob wins a projectile war handily thanks to his Shadow Charge being fast enough to hit Nightwolf before his projectiles leave his hands. If Nightwolf catches on and decides that he wants to absorb the Shadows because he can't reflect them, Noob can whiff a Shadow Upknee to bait Nightwolf into using a bar of meter to perform his Absorb. The more shadows Noob flings at Nightwolf, the more meter he builds and the more likely he is to counter an Arrow Shot or Lightning attempt with his X-Ray. This matchup is a testament to how one thing can change the dynamics of a battle. This matchup remains tactical but it is Noob's for the taking.

WORST MATCHUP

Noob Saibot's worst matchup is probably against Jade. Whereas Nightwolf cannot use a special move to thwart Noob's Shadow attacks, Jade is the opposite. Her Shadow Flash renders Noob's Shadow attacks almost useless as long as she can perform it consistently and not have it hinder the flow of what she has to do in order to reap the benefits of the Shadow Flash. If Jade activates the Shadow Glow and performs a Reboomerang, this nullifies almost all of Noob's options. If Noob throws a Shadow at Jade around the same time she does this, it will pass through her and he will eat two hits from the Reboomerang. If he tries to counter the Reboomerang by performing a Teleport Slam, the Reboomerang will hit Noob on its way back from the other side of the screen and break his momentum. In close, Jade can pressure with 3, 4 into her Staff Overhead and with low attacks comboed into her Shadow Kick. Noob's attacks in close quarters are just slow enough to not pose any retaliatory threat. This matchup can only be competitive if Jade can't maintain her Shadow Glow consistently. Jade has Noob's number from the beginning of the round until she finishes him.

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QUAN CHI

Bio

The NetherRealm has produced many vile beings, but none rival the Arch-Sorcerer Quan Chi. In lieu of Nether-Realm demons, he prefers to resurrect deceased warriors for use in his sinister plans. Foremost among them is the tortured Shirai Ryu ninja Scorpion, who is Quan Chi's personal assassin. Quan Chi is building an army of such specters—the purpose of which has yet to be revealed. Another mystery is the sorcerer's involvement in the Mortal Kombat tournament. The NetherRealm has no stake in its outcome, which leads some observers to question his presence....

General Strategies

Quan Chi has a vast array of moves made to confuse an opponent. His Skeletal Boost gives him a health or damage boost that lasts for a short period of time. Quan's Trance stuns the opponent for a free combo (and can also be done after a pop-up combo such as 2, Away + 1). His enhanced version of the Trance takes away one bar of Super Meter from an opponent if it connects. Another efficient pop-up attack includes Away + 3, 1 + 2 simultaneously that you can use to juggle into a chain combo and then a Trance for another free combo for slick damage. It is almost a necessity if you are at the end of the screen to utilize the Skeletal Boost for the free bonus and standard Trance because the hit box takes up half the screen!

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Quan Chi	103.5	4	5	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	4	X	3	4	4	4.5	3	5	4	3	4	4	4	5

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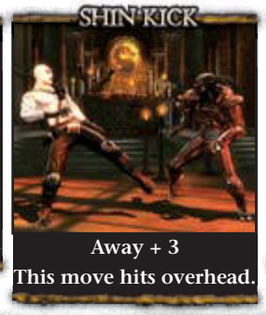
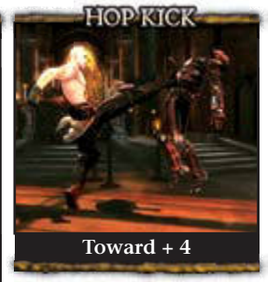
Basic Moves





Chain Combos

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ROOT OF EVIL

2, 1, 4

ENCHANTMENT

2, 1, Up + 3 The last hit of this chain hits overhead.

WOUNDED WRATH

Away + 2, 1

INCANTATION

Away + 2, 4

DETERIORATION

Away + 3, 3

ANNIHILATION

Away + 3, 2 + 1 The second hit of this chain hits overhead.

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

SINISTER

Away + 2, 1, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

DIE-ABOLICAL

Away + 3, 1 + 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

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Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

Alternative Means

1, 1, Tag

Kruel Intentions

Toward + 1, 2, Tag

Bad Omen

2, 1, Tag

Special Moves

Skeletal Boost (Health or Damage Boost)

Down, Away, 4

This move can either increase the damage of Quan Chi's subsequent attack or restore some of his health. You have no control over which one happens, but you can control when it happens. This move has a long recovery, so it's best to perform it immediately after a Jump Kick or after Quan Chi's Away + 3, 1 + 2 chain.

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Down, Away, 1 | Down, Toward, 1 | Down, Away, Toward, 1

This ground projectile has one of the longest recovery times in the game and can be easily escaped on reaction with a jump. It's best to use this in the middle of a chain combo to maximize its chance of landing.

Down, Away, 2

This projectile is one of the slowest in the game. It won't do too much good in a firefight, but it does make for a good combo ender.

Away, Toward, 3

This move renders the opponent defenseless if landed, but is severely punished if blocked.

Down, Away, 3 (can be done in the air)

This move can only be comboed off of 1, 1 but is useful in countering an opponent from above when they get too predictable in throwing their projectiles. Hold Away or Toward to land in front or behind opponent; neutral lands on top of opponent at the spot where the special move was first input.

Enhanced Moves

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

Down, Away, 1 + Block | Down, Toward, 1 + Block | Down, Away, Toward, 1 + Block

This is a far more useful version of the Ground Burst, being that it's unblockable and can be comboed off of a chain. This means it's almost guaranteed damage if an opponent is blocking a chain combo that is comboed into the Ground Blast. It just doesn't do a good deal of damage.

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SKELETAL BUFF

Down, Away, 4 + Block

This version of the boost gives you both the Power Boost and the Health Boost. When performed successfully, this is an excellent benefit. However, the recovery is so long that an opponent can usually interrupt it with a wake-up attack.

SKULL CHOMP

Down, Away, 2 + Block

This functions like the regular Skull Ball, just with added damage.

SKY STOMP

Down, Away, 3 + Block (can be done in the air)

MESMERIZE

Away, Toward, 3 + Block

This works just as the Trance does, but this version drains almost an entire bar of meter from an opponent that they could have potentially used to combo-break whichever combo Quan Chi planned to hit them with after landing the Mesmerize.

WAKE-UP MOVES

SKY DROP

Down, Away, 3

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Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (5 HITS)

Trance, Toward + 1, 2, 1 + 2

COMBO B (5 HITS)

Neutral Jump Punch, Dash in, 2, 1, 2, Skull Ball

COMBO C (5 HITS)

Jump Punch, 1, 1, 2, Sky Drop (holding Toward)

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Expert Combos

COMBO A (8 HITS)

Jump Punch, 1, 1, Trance

COMBO B (10 HITS)

Away + 3, 3, Trance, 1, 1, 2, Sky Stomp (holding Toward)

COMBO C (13 HITS)

Jump Punch, Away + 3, 1 + 2, Dash in, Away + 1, 1, Mesmerize, Jump Punch, 1, 1 Sky Stomp

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

AMULET ASSAULT

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

Quan Chi's X-Ray is one of the coolest-looking but the least effective in the game. It doesn't travel very far and only hits high, meaning that a simple duck will keep an opponent out of harm's way and in position to counter the X-Ray attempt with an Uppercut. This X-Ray attack is best used after Trance, a pop-up, or a juggle combo after a pop-up.

Finishing Moves

BEAT DOWN

Toward, Toward, Down, Down, 1 (sweep distance)

ON YOUR KNEES

Down, Toward, Down, Toward, 4

STAGE FATALITY

Away, Toward, Down, 2

Best Matchup

Quan Chi's best matchup is against Cyber Sub-Zero. He has more answers for Cyber Sub than the inverse. He can counter Cyber Sub's Iceball on reaction with the Sky Drop. If Cyber Sub throws an Ice Bomb anywhere near half-screen distance, Quan Chi can counter with Trance (and Quan Chi will have time to jump away from the bomb into any combo he wants to land on the hypnotized opponent). Also, if Quan makes Cyber Sub apprehensive about throwing his relatively slow Ice Ball, he can score some quick damage with the far Ground Blast. This can be somewhat of a plodding and uneventful matchup, but if both play to the best of their ability, Quan Chi will be the last man standing.

Worst Matchup

Quan Chi has a hard time against quite a few characters, but Kano is probably the most frustrating opponent to fight overall. Quan Chi has no real answer to Kano's Knife Throw, as it recovers too fast to counter with a Sky Drop. A steady dosage of the Knife Throw also makes it hard for Quan Chi to trade hits with Ground Burst (since it can hit Quan and stifle the Ground Burst animation just before it completes). If Quan Chi tries to jump over a Knife Throw, he gets hit with the Ball. Quan's best bet is to perform a Sky Drop and control it so that it whiffs Kano (and lands either in front of or behind him), just to close the distance. And even then he's put at a disadvantage. This is a bad matchup on paper and an even worse matchup in practice, depending on how much Kano wants to abuse his natural advantages.

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RAIDEN

Bio

Raiden is the god of thunder and protector of EarthRealm. Ageless and wise beyond measure, he leads EarthRealm's mortals in the endless battle against the forces of darkness. When Shao Kahn, Emperor of Outworld, threatened to merge his realm with EarthRealm, an overwhelmed Raiden implored the Elder Gods to give EarthRealm a fighting chance. Thus the Mortal Kombat tournament was created. For millennia, Shao Kahn has been kept at bay, but nine consecutive losses to Goro have eroded hope that EarthRealm can be saved. Determined to prevent Armageddon, Raiden tirelessly quests to find a champion worthy of Mortal Kombat.

General Strategies

Raiden's ability to Teleport behind an opponent instantaneously allows him to compete with anyone in the cast match-up-wise and allows him to avoid projectile wars. His 3, 3, 4 combo is his bread-and-butter pop-up setup into Teleport into Electrocute Grab into more juggle follow-ups. Dashing at your opponent and doing this combo when they are blocking can let you create a mini-vortex mix-up of blocking, sweeps, or Raiden's Away + 3, 1, 2 pop-up combo. Raiden's wake-up Electric Fly enhanced move goes through all projectiles, and his standard wake-up will go through them through the first eight frames. (Wake-up moves have an initial eight frames of invincibility.) Raiden's Teleport is especially fast if canceled from any basic attack that is blocked so you can turn on the mind games with throws, sweeps, or the easiest method: attempting an immediate cross-up into a combo starter because your opponent is usually stuck in block-stun (due to habit, not due to the game) and is not expecting such a quick move. Attempted jump-in combo starters after the Teleport can be countered with a simple jumping away Air Kick, so be careful telegraphing these after a Teleport.

Character Tier Preview

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Raiden	161	7	7	6.5	5.5	6	6	5	5.5	5	6	5	5.5	5.5	5	6	7	X	6	6	6	6	6.5	6	6	6	6	6	7

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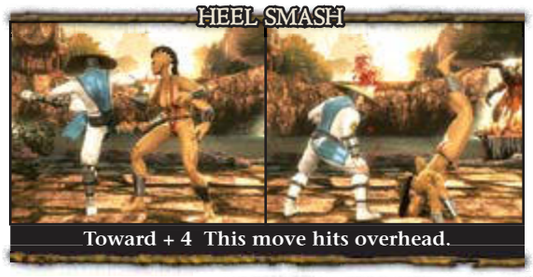
Basic Moves

Away + 2

Toward + 2

Away + 3

Toward + 3



Toward + 4 This move hits overhead.

Down + 2

Away + 4

Chain Combos

1, 2, 1, 2

2, 2, Toward + 1

2, 2, Away + 4 The last hit of this chain hits low.

Away + 2, Toward + 1, 2 + 1

Toward + 2, 4

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FLASH STORM

Toward + 2, 3, 2 + 1

SPARK KICKS

3, 3, 4 The last hit of this chain hits overhead.

THUNDER GOD

Away + 3, 1, 2 The last hit of this chain hits overhead.

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

DISTANT THUNDER

3, 3, 4, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

ELDER FURY

Away + 3, 1, 2, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

GOD FIST

Toward + 2, 4, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

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Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

GODLIKE

2, 2, Tag

SUPERNATURAL

Away + 2, Toward + 1, Tag

DIVINE POWER

Toward + 2, 3, Tag

Special Moves

LIGHTNING

Down, Away, 1

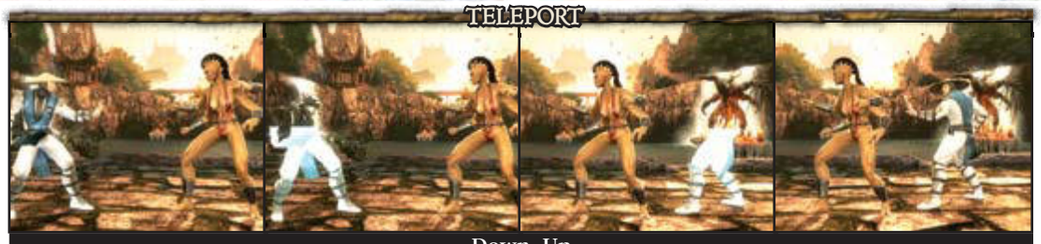
This is a relatively slow projectile with below-average recovery time. It's best used in the middle of a chain combo or as a combo ender.

ELECTROCUTE

Down, Toward, 2

This is a throw maneuver that can land at only point-blank range. When landed, there is a small window where Raiden can Uppercut or juggle with 1, 1 into the Electric Fly.

TELEPORT



Down, Up

This puts you right behind your opponent. Against projectile heavy characters, this move is a must.

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ELECTRIC FLY

Away, Toward, 3 (can be done in the air)

This is an extremely fast attack that is applicable in any situation, whether it's within a chain combo or a juggle combo, or whether it's simply to fly out of the corner (over or under your opponent) when under pressure. Also, this move is fast enough to catch someone off guard at half-screen distance.

VICINITY BLAST

Down, Away, 2

If landed on the ground, this attack will simply send a burst of electricity into an opponent's face, but if landed within a juggle combo, it will pop the opponent up for just enough time to sneak an attack (such as the Electric Fly) before they hit the ground.

ENHANCED MOVES

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

BOLT

Down, Away, 1 + Block

The regular Lightning isn't very useful, but the Bolt is an excellent tool for keeping an opponent in check. It looks like the Lightning attack but dishes out a second bolt of lightning that makes its way back toward Raiden; this stops anyone trying to jump or close the distance.

SHOCKER

Down, Toward, 2 + Block

This works like the Electrocute, only it has much more range, which helps when you want to Electrocute someone in a juggle combo.

THUNDER FLY

Away, Toward, 3 + Block (can be done in the air)

This functions just the same as the Electric Fly, only it deals more damage.

SPARKPORT

Down, Up, + Block

This performs two Teleports back-to-back, which can confuse an opponent by changing their directional focus two times in the span of a second.

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VICINITY BURST

Down, Away, 2 + Block

This works just like the Vicinity Blast, but this version causes a more forceful knock-back reaction. With timing, you can score with an Electric Fly after a Vicinity Burst (before the opponent hits the ground).

WAKE-UP MOVES

ELECTRIC FLY

Away, Toward, 3

VICINITY BLAST

Down, Away, 2

TELEPORT

Down, Up

X-RAY ATTACKS

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

SHOCK THERAPY

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

Raiden's X-Ray has pretty good range, and you can combo it off of plenty of his chain combos, such as 3, 3, 4 or Away + 3, 1, 2. It's also good to use right after telegraphing (and countering) an opponent's projectile with the Teleport. In addition, it can be used as an anti-air.

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Intermediate Combos

Combo A (4 Hits)

1, 2, 1, Lightning

Combo B (5 Hits)

Jump Punch, 2, 2, Electrocute, Uppercut

Combo C (5 Hits)

Away + 3, 1, 2, Electric Fly

Expert Combos

Combo A (7 Hits)

Electrocute, 1, Vicinity Blast, Dash in, 3, 3 Electric Fly

Combo B (8 Hits)

Jump Punch, Away + 3, 1, 2, Dash in, 1, Vicinity Burst, Electric Fly

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COMBO C (11 HITS)

Jump Punch, 3, 3, 4, Teleport, Electrocute, 1, Vicinity Blast, Dash in, 3, 3, Thunder Fly

Finishing Moves

JUST A SCRATCH

Down, Toward, Down, Toward, 1 (one jump outside opponent)

TRANSPLANT
Away, Toward, Toward, Down, 4

STAGE FATALITY
Down, Down, Down, 2

Best Matchup

Raiden's best matchup is against Cyber Sub-Zero. Raiden can counter just about anything Cyber Sub-Zero can do. If Cyber Sub throws an Ice Ball, Raiden can Teleport and mount an offense from behind. If Cyber Sub-Zero throws an Ice Bomb, Raiden can Electric Fly or Teleport on reaction. If Cyber Sub tries to close the distance with a Divekick, Raiden can fire his Bolt attack, then Teleport behind him or jump at him to mount his own offense. If Cyber Sub tries his own Teleport, Raiden can punish it with the Electrocution, then juggle him off of it. Raiden can even use his normal Lightning attack in a firefight against Cyber Sub due to the Ice Ball being so slow. This match is a complete squash in Raiden's favor.

Worst Matchup

Raiden has no real bad matchups, but Kano gives him quite a challenge. Raiden can usually Teleport behind an opponent as they shoot their projectile on reaction, forcing them to be on the defensive. In Kano's case, his Knife Throw recovers so quickly that he's ready to attack at the same time Raiden appears behind him. This leads to a tense game that leaves Raiden wondering questions like, "Is he going to do the Up Ball when I Teleport behind him?" or "Will he feel I'm too smart for that and try to throw me while I stand ready to block the Up Ball?" It's these situations that make this match a bona fide battle for Raiden, as he is never in complete control in a bout against Kano.

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REPTILE

Evo

His home realm of Zaterra is gone, mysteriously destroyed ages ago. Reptile is the last known surviving member of his race. He has since made Outworld his home. Shao Kahn has made use of Reptile's mastery of stealth to spy on suspected traitors and slay known enemies of the empire. But the knowledge that he is the last of his kind gnaws at Reptile. He would give anything, kill anyone, if it would bring his realm back from the abyss. Self-pity fuels his aggression as he inflicts suffering and death on others.

General Strategies

Reptile's overall walk speed and uppercut speed are slower than most of the characters, which means you will have to anticipate a bit more if an opponent is jumping as opposed to utilizing a defensive uppercut as a reactionary defensive counter. Reptile's 3, 2, 1 standard chain combo is very effective to set up a special move juggle or as the ender on juggles stemming from the Slow and Fast Force Balls. Reptile's Elbow Dash is so fast that it is nearly impossible to block on reaction. In addition, whereas his standard Slide is very quick, it is highly susceptible to being "baited" out by an opponent for crazy combo damage if they block an attempted Slide.

Character Tier Preview

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Reptile	136	5	6	5	5	5	5.5	4.5	5	4.5	5	4.5	5.5	5	4.5	5.5	6	4	X	5	5.5	4	6	5	4	5	4.5	5.5	6

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Basic Moves

Down + 2 | Toward + 2 | Away + 1 | Toward + 3 | Away + 4

Chain Combos

COLD BLOODED

1, 2, 4

CARNIVORE BASH

1, 2, 2, 1 The third hit of this chain hits mid.

DEADLY VENOM

1, 2, Away + 1 The last hit of this chain hits low.

JUST HATCHED

2, Toward + 3

HYBRID BLAST

2, 4 + 3 The second hit of this chain hits overhead.

HYBRID CRUSH

2, Toward + 3, 2 + 1

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Toward + 2, Away + 1

3, 2, 1

3, 2, Away + 4 The last hit of this chain hits low.

Toward + 3, 2 + 1

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

1, 2, 2, 1, Tag

Toward + 2, Away + 1, Tag

3, 2, 1, Tag

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SHREDDING SKIN

Away, Toward, 2 + Block, Tag

TAG COMBOS (TAG MODE ONLY)

TOXIC

1, 2, Tag

RAVENOUS

1, 2, 2, Tag

ANGUISH

3, 2, Tag

SCALY SERPENT

2, Toward + 3, Tag

BAD BLOOD

Toward + 2, Tag

SPECIAL MOVES

SLOW FORCE BALL

Away, Away, 1

FAST FORCE BALL

Away, Away, 3

SLIDE

Away, Toward, 4

This move is very fast, hits low, and travels under most opponents' projectiles. It is a very effective attack but leaves Reptile open for severe punishment when blocked. Before utilizing this move, use Reptile's overhead attacks to get the opponent to block high.

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ACID HAND

Down, Away, 2

You can combo this move off of any standing or ducking attack, and off of any hit of his chain combos. What makes it effective is that it hits overhead. In addition, 3, 2 into Acid Hand works great after landing his Slithered chain combo (which ends hitting low).

INVISIBILITY

Down, Up, 4

This move renders Reptile nearly invisible. Jump Kicks work great when in this state, due to it being harder for an opponent to gauge where your leg is in order to hit Reptile out of the air.

ACID SPIT

Down, Toward, 1

Pretty quick projectile with decent recovery; it can serve as a good follow-up after a Slow Force Ball.

ELBOW DASH

Away, Toward, 2

This is another very fast move. It's so fast that if you're anywhere from up close to half a screen distance away, it's almost impossible to block on reaction. However, not unlike Reptile's Slide, there is a price of severe punishment to pay if your opponent blocks this move.

ENHANCED MOVES

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

SLOW MEGA BALL

Away, Away, 1 + Block (hold 1 to charge)

FAST MEGA BALL

Away, Away, 3 + Block [Hold 3 to charge]

The diameter of a fully charged Mega Ball is much bigger than a Force Ball, allowing for you to control more real estate. You can charge them for up to two seconds, and you can let them go at any point during the charge (which allows for varied timing that an opponent has to keep track of). Throw in the fact that you can have both the Slow Mega Ball and Fast Mega Ball on the screen at the same time and it turns the simple act of jumping over a telegraphed Forceball into an annoying task.

REPTILIAN HAND

Down, Away, 2 + Block

This version causes higher damage and pops the opponent up, leaving them open for anything you can think of. Reptile's Amphibian Charge chain is a perfect fit, for instance.

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SLIME TRAIL

Away, Toward, 4 + BLOCK

This move is every bit as good as the normal one but with the benefit of two extra hits and more damage. It makes for an excellent combo ender, whether it's after a juggle or tacked onto the end of a chain combo.

VANISH

Down, Up, 4 + Block

The normal version of the invisibility renders Reptile nearly invisible. This version leaves Reptile *completely* invisible. Fast attacks such as his Elbow Dash and Slide work great when invisible, as they cover ground fast and will almost surely be unexpected.

ACID STREAM

Down, Toward, 1 + Block

This version of the Acid Spit does more damage and covers much more horizontal real estate than the normal one. So much so, that an opponent can't jump over it. It's a great zoning tool and if connected will push the opponent back, effectively putting them back in range for Acid Spits and Force Balls.

REPTILIAN ELBOW

Away, Toward, 2 + Block

Like the normal version of this move, it's a phenomenal move to wake up with (due to its speed). This version gives you an extra hit for higher damage, and leaves the opponent in the air long enough to be juggled with a very fast attack such as Reptile's Slide (or EX Slide for even more damage).

Wake-Up Moves

SLOW FORCE BALL

Away, Away, 1

SLIDE

Away, Toward, 4

FAST FORCE BALL

Away, Away, 3

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Down, Up, 4

Away, Toward, 2 This is the fastest wake-up attack in the game.

Intermediate Combos

Slow Force Ball, 1, 2, Acid Spit

Fast Force Ball, Slow Force Ball, 1, 2, 2, 1

Corner: 1, 2, 2, 1, juggle with 1, Uppercut

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Expert Combos

COMBO A (8 HITS)

1, 2, 2, Force Ball, 3, 2, 1, Acid Stream

COMBO B (7 HITS)

Jump Punch, 3, 2, Reptilian Hand, Dash in, Toward + 3, 1 + 2

COMBO C (13 HITS)

1, 2, 2, Slow Force Ball, 3, 2, Fast Force Ball, 3, 2, 1, Slime Trail

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

TRICKY LIZARD

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

Reptile's X-Ray Attack is very fast, reaches full screen, and is unblockable. Since it is a grabbing X-Ray, you cannot combo it off of a chain, but it can pass through just about any projectile thrown from almost full screen and catch the opponent (before they recover from throwing said projectile). Don't be careless, though; this X-Ray can be avoided simply by ducking. Just make sure your opponent is standing or blocking high before you perform this move.

Finishing Moves

ACID YAK

Toward, Toward, Down, Up, 3

WEIGHT LOSS

Down, Down, Toward, Away, 1

STAGE FATALITY

Toward, Down, Down, Block

Best Matchup

Reptile's best matchup is against Sheeva. His projectile specials make for an unnerving and frustrating experience for the Shokan warrior. Because of her size, Sheeva has a slightly harder time jumping over the Force Ball, and it's almost impossible for her to jump over a Mega Ball. Couple that with Reptile's speedy Acid Spit and impossible-to-jump-over Acid Stream and you have the elements to keep Sheeva at bay for as long as you'd like. What's worse is that a charging Mega Ball will beat a Jump Stomp cleanly. This means you can train Sheeva to try and counter a Force Ball with the Jump Stomp, then simply hold the Mega Ball charge for the counter. In the event that Sheeva begins her Jump Stomp as Reptile is throwing a normal Force Ball (and looks like she will land it), he can perform his Elbow Dash to dart out of harm's way at the very last second. Frankly speaking, this match can serve as target practice for Reptile with not much reciprocation from Sheeva.

Worst Matchup

Reptile's worst matchup is Nightwolf. His projectiles lend themselves to being creative and unpredictable zoning tools. Nightwolf simply has none of it. Anything Reptile can dish out from full screen, Nightwolf can reflect right back at him and then some. When Nightwolf reflects a Force Ball, Reptile has so many things to worry about, it's scary. If Reptile wants to block a reflected Force Ball, Nightwolf can land the Thunder Storm. If he tries to jump over it, Nightwolf can Uppercut, Tomahawk, or Shoulder him out of the air. If he tries to jump away from the reflected Force Ball, Nightwolf can land his Power Charge from almost full-screen distance and knock Reptile backward while the Force Ball approaches him as he gets up (which forces him to block and get hit with Lightning or a Thunder Storm)! In this match, it's almost a waste of time for Reptile to use his projectiles, as the more he gives, the more he's going to get in the end.

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SCORPION

Bio

Hanzo Hasashi was once a member of the Japanese Shirai Ryu ninja clan. Given the name Scorpion for his blindingly fast and deadly fighting skill, his life was blessed with glorious kombat in the name of his Grand Master. But when he, his family, and his clan were brutally exterminated by Sub-Zero and the Lin Kuei, Scorpion's existence became eternal torment. Resurrected by the malevolent necromancer Quan Chi, he entered the Mortal Kombat tournament to slay Sub-Zero and avenge the murders of his kin.

General Strategies

Scorpion's classic juggle combos involving his Teleport and a Spear after a jump-in kick are still intact; however, they are much harder to do and are not really part of his bread-and-butter combos. Scorpion's best special move is Demon Fire, which is best utilized after any jump-in combo or chain combo due to the opponent's inability to block it. When close to your opponent, perform mix-ups of 1, 1, and 1, 1, 1, then a small delay; this will make your opponent guess whether to jump away or toward you, allowing you to perform a Demon Fire, uppercut, or Sweep, plowing on the free damage. This also allows you to keep the offense going with your opponent doing a ton of guessing.

If an Away + 2 attack successfully hits, you can get a free Spear or Jump Kick into Air Throw. Scorpion's Toward + 3 acts as a good medium overhead attack, and you can keep on the pressure with mix-ups from this, Away + 2, and his Sweep, along with added 1, 1 or 1, 1, 1 attacks. Scorpion doesn't need to use enhanced moves because he can save up for his X-Ray Attack. Scorpion's X-Ray has the unique ability of teleporting under his opponent; if you are concerned about your combo abilities, you can easily perform this after a Spear for easy high-level damage.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Scorpion	135.5	6	6	5.5	4.5	5	5	4.5	4	5	5	4.5	5	4	4.5	5	6	4	5	X	6	4	6	5	4.5	5	5.5	5	6

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Basic Moves

Toward + 2

Away + 2 This attack hits overhead.

Down + 2

Toward + 3 This attack hits overhead.

Toward + 4

Away + 4

Chain Combos

2, 2 + 1 The second hit of this chain hits overhead.

Toward + 4, 3

1, 1, 4

1, 1, 1

2, 1, 2 The last hit of this chain hits overhead.

Toward + 2, 1, 4

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DEAD END

3, 3, 4

Fast Tags (Tag Mode Only)

UNDERWORLD

2, 1 + 2, Tag

SOULLESS

Away + 2, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

ETERNAL VENGEANCE

1, 1, Tag

PUNISHMENT

2, 1, Tag

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AFFLICTION

Toward + 2, 1, Tag

REVENGE

3, 3, Tag

Special Moves

SPEAR

Away, Away, 1

This is the classic Spear with the same applications we've seen throughout the <I>MK<I> series. Using this in the middle of a chain combo or after Scorpion's Away + 2 overhead attack serves as a good gateway to further damage.

DEMON FIRE

Down, Away, 2

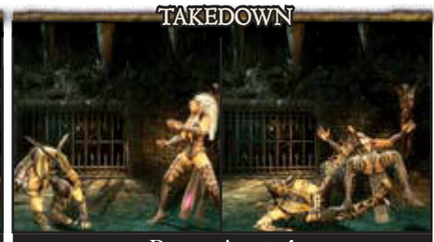
This is an unblockable move that is fast enough to catch an opponent off guard almost at will if used in conjunction with low attacks, such as Sweep and Takedown.

TELEPORT

Down, Away, 3 (can be done in the air)

Use this move to counter projectile-happy opponents. You can also combo it off of any jump attack and can utilize it in juggles.

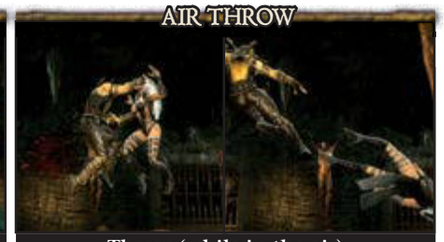
TAKEDOWN



Down, Away, 4

Takedown comes in handy when wanting to sneak in a low attack in the middle of Scorpion's chain combos. This also works like a charm in a do-or die-situation once you've got the opponent looking out for his overhead attacks.

AIR THROW



Throw (while in the air)

This is best as an effective (and stylish) juggle ender. It also works great after landing a Demon Fire up close, due to an opponent's natural tendency to jump away after getting hit with one.

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Enhanced Moves

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

FLAME SPEAR

Away, Away, 1 + Block

This functions like the normal Spear, but Scorpion hurls two spears instead of one for an increase in damage.

HELL FIRE

Down, Away, 1 + Block

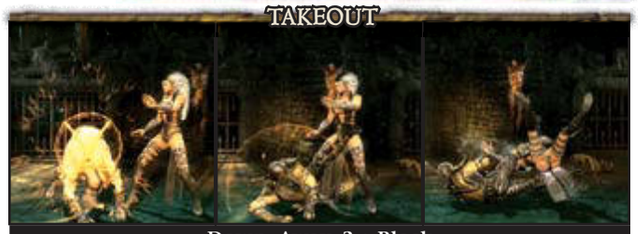
This works like the regular Demon Fire but is much harder to jump away from, as it covers more vertical space than the normal version.

FLAMEPORT

Down, Away, 4 + Block (can be done in the air)

This looks like the normal Teleport but hits twice, thus fooling an opponent and hitting them during their natural tendency to punish a normal Teleport after blocking it.

TAKEOUT



Down, Away, 3 + Block

This functions the same as Takedown but with added damage.

Wake-Up Moves

TELEPORT

Down, Away, 3

X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

SCORPION STING

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

This is probably the most applicable X-Ray Attack in the game. You can land it off of Scorpion's Away + 3 overhead and his Spear, and you can use it within his chain combos and as a juggle ender. Also, you can use it to punish a projectile attempt due to it being a Teleport in itself. Basically, when Scorpion has full meter, he can capitalize on almost any mistake an opponent makes, potentially landing the X-Ray for big damage.

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Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

Jump Kick, Teleport, Spear, Uppercut

COMBO B (5 HITS)

Spear, 3, 3, Takedown

COMBO C (5 HITS)

Away + 2, dash in, 1, 1, Teleport, dash in, Uppercut

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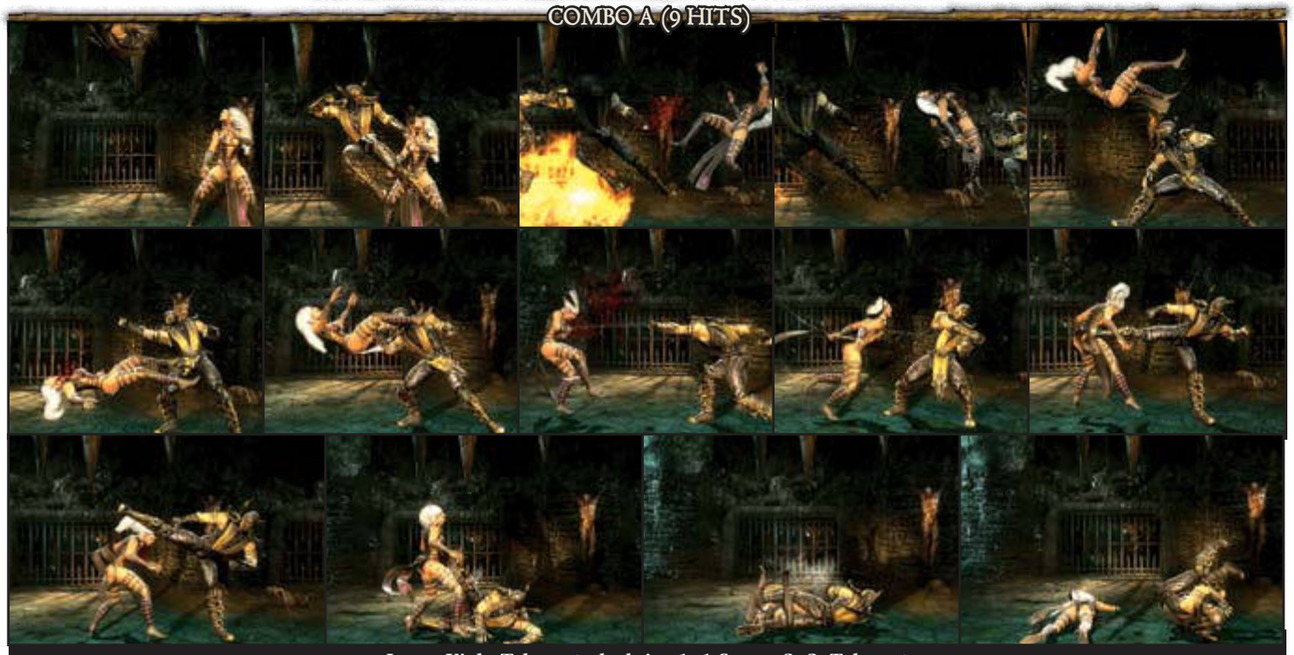
Expert Combos

COMBO A (9 HITS)



Jump Kick, Teleport, dash in, 1, 1 Spear, 3, 3, Takeout

COMBO B (10 HITS)

Away + 2, dash in, 1, 1, Flameport, Teleport, Spear, 2, 1, 1 + 2

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COMBO C (13 HITS)

Jump punch, toward + 2, 1, Spear, Jump punch, 2, 1 + 2, Teleport, dash in, 1, 1, Teleport, ducking 1, Flame Spear

Finishing Moves

SPLIT DECISION

Toward, Down, Toward, 2

NETHER-GATE
Away, Toward, Away, 3

STAGE FATALITY
Forward, Up, Up, 1

Best Matchup

Scorpion doesn't particularly dominate any one character to the point where it's one-sided, but he does handle Baraka pretty well. Demon Fire is the bane of Baraka's existence in this matchup since he has the weakest projectile game out of the whole cast. Scorpion can almost win this match strictly by performing Demon Fire with varied timing (and distance since it tracks) and either Uppercutting, performing a Spear, or teleporting to safety when Baraka tries to jump in. Whenever a Spear lands for Scorpion, you should end a combo with an Air Throw so that it resets both fighters at full-screen distance; this lets him kick off more Demon Fire shenanigans. Baraka has to get in close to give Scorpion trouble and Scorpion has little trouble keeping him out.

Worst Matchup

Scorpion's move set allows him to fare well against any opposition, but the one that can instinctively give him the most trouble is Mileena. Her special moves naturally lend themselves to be counter to Scorpion's special moves. For instance, her Ball Roll goes under his Spear. Her Teleport Drop can land on top of him as he's performing a Spear or Demon Fire. She can perform her Air Sai Blasts very low to the ground so that Scorpion doesn't have enough time to react with a Teleport (to counter her from behind on her way down) or a Demon Fire (since he gets hit with the Air Sai Blast). This is a very competitive matchup on the surface, but Mileena definitely has Scorpion's number.

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SEKTOR

Bio

As the son of the Grand Master, it was never in question that Sektor would join the Lin Kuei. What pleases the Grand Master is the degree to which his son relishes the life of an assassin. The secretive clan allows Sektor to express his darker nature, using any means necessary to complete his tasks. Hired by Shang Tsung, his current assignment is to attend the Mortal Kombat tournament and eliminate the EarthRealm competitors before they have a chance to compete. Though this mission will put his clan in good standing with Shao Kahn, Sektor's ultimate goal is to supplant his father as Grand Master of the Lin Kuei.

General Strategies

Sektor's staple attacks revolve around constantly using his Super Meter and knowing when to set up attacks that follow his Up Missiles and Homing Missiles with 1, 2, Away + 1 and a Teleport Juggle or Metal Uppercut. Sektor can deal easy damage after a combo starter to 1, 2, Away + 1 into Jump Kick, Air Teleport + additional juggle moves, making him very dangerous. Sektor's Leg Lift can severely mess with blocking opponents. He can dash out of the initial setup move and perform techniques such as Attack 4 (which hits overhead and can be canceled into a Teleport) or Throw, or he can hit the opponent with a Toe Kick.

Meter building is important with Sektor, as many of his moves that were standard in the older *MK* games now require at least one bar of Super Meter. Sektor's Flame Burner has excellent range, and when used in conjunction with his Up Missiles and Homing Missiles, it creates a vast array of options for Sektor if one of these successfully connects.

One of the most important aspects of the game is learning to correctly cancel special moves from regular attacks. There is a high probability for canceling a special move earlier than necessary when using the same button; therefore, if you are trying to attack an opponent, use an Attack button that is not on the same plane as the button of the special move. For example, Sektor's Teleport Uppercut can be connected into a juggle combo from a jumping Attack 3 or 4 (Jump Kick), but if you jump in with Attack 4 early and perform the motion for the Teleport Uppercut, you might miss the command because the input for both an Air Teleport Uppercut and Attack 4 are used by the same button. Just to be safe, you should jump in with Attack 3, then perform the input for an Air Teleport Uppercut. One crucial mistake that players make in tournaments is being too "certain" of their abilities and safety during a battle. Playing *not to lose* is one of the most important things to remember. Something as simple as inputting a special move cancel too early can cost you your tournament life.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Sektor	123	5	5.5	5	4	5	4.5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4.5	4	5.5	5.5	4	4.5	4	X	4	6	4.5	4	4.5	4.5	5	5.5

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Basic Moves

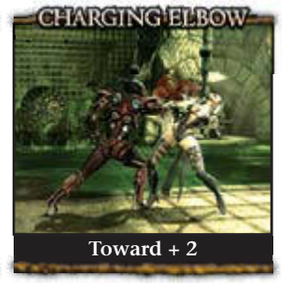
Down + 2

Away + 1

Away + 2

Away + 3

Toward + 4



Toward + 2

Back + 4

Up + 3, Toe Kick, 4 This move hits overhead.

3, 4

Chain Combos

1, 1, Away + 1

Toward + 2, Away + 1

1, 2, Away + 1

RUN DOWN
Back + 3, 4

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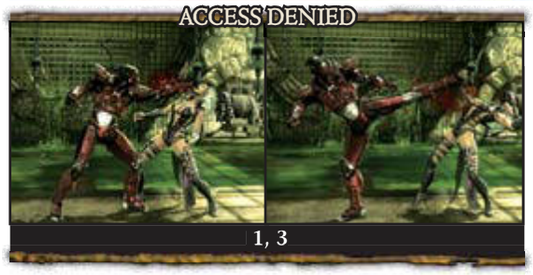
1, 2, 2 The last hit of this chain hits overhead.

1, 2, 4



1, 3

2, 1, 4

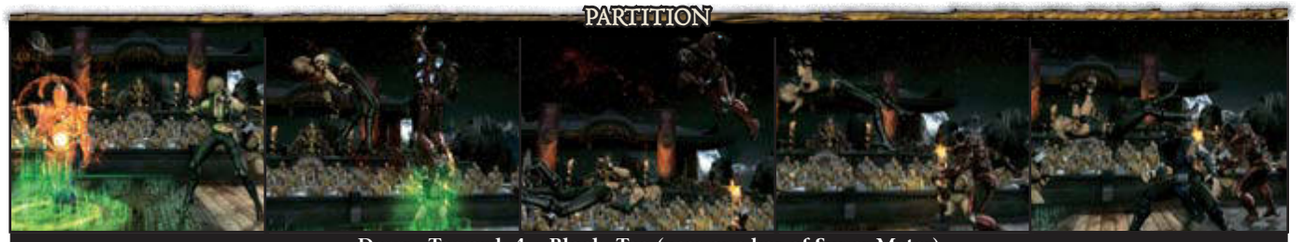
Away + 2, 1

Toward + 4, 3

Toward + 4, 4

Fast Tags (Tag Mode Only)

Down, Toward, 4, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.



Down, Toward, 4 + Block, Tag (uses one bar of Super Meter)
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

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SYSTEM LOCK

1, 2, Away + 1, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

DETACHED

1, 2, Tag

SPARE PARTS

2, 1, Tag

BRANCH OFF

Away + 2, Tag

SYSTEM BACKUP

Toward + 4, Tag

Special Moves

STRAIGHT MISSILE

Away, Toward, 1

UP MISSILE (BEHIND)

Down, Away, Toward, 3 (lands from behind)

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FLAME BURNER

Away, Toward, 2

This move is great for keeping an opponent at bay, as it covers significant real estate and stays active for a considerable amount of time. It also pushes an opponent back a good deal if they block it.

TELEPORT UPPERCUT

Down, Toward, 4

You can perform this at any point during a jump, and you can combo it off of jump attacks and chain combos. Since it pops the opponent up, the move naturally lends itself for juggling. However, due to how bad it is pushed when blocked, it's unwise to perform this move outside of a juggle combo or off a chain. Performing the Teleport Uppercut off of 2, 1 is the safest way to use it and pays off nicely when landed.

UP MISSILE (ABOVE)

Down, Away, 3 (lands on top)

This lands on top of an opponent's head and acts as an anti-air if they jump close enough to you while the missile is on the way up. Combo Attack 4 into this move and your opponent will be pushed back just far enough for the Up Missile to meet them shortly after they recover from the kick, whether they block it or not.

UP MISSILE (IN FRONT)

Down, Toward, Away, 3 (lands in front)

Use this version of the Up Missile when an opponent tries to get away from the Above Up Missile by closing the distance, as he'll run right into it.

ENHANCED MOVES

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

METAL UPPERCUT

Down, Toward, 4 + Block

This version of the Teleport Cut hits twice instead of once and causes extra damage.

HOMING MISSILE

Down, Away, 3 + Block

This move is great in that it can distract your opponent from trying to attack you, and if it lands and you're quick enough, you can combo into another move (after the Homing Missile connects).

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FLAME THROWER

Away, Toward, 2 + Block

This works like the normal version but stays active a little longer and does a little more damage.

DOUBLE MISSILE

Away, Toward, 1 + Block

This version of the normal Missile does more damage and can hit a ducking opponent (they are forced to duck-block it).

Wake-Up Moves

TELEPORT UPPERCUT

Down, Toward, 4

X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

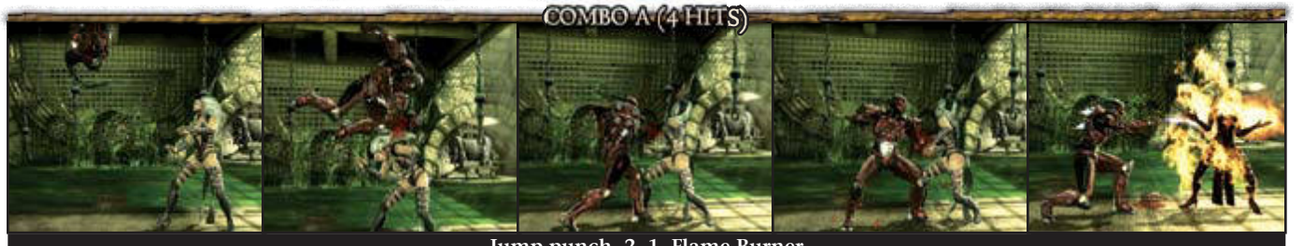
MASSIVE MISSILE

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

This X-Ray Attack is very good since you can use it after Sektor's Teleport Uppercut and in the middle of a chain. It travels full screen and cannot be ducked, so if the opponent is used to ducking your Straight Missiles, they won't know what hit them if you slip this into the mix.

Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)



Jump punch, 2, 1, Flame Burner

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COMBO B (5 HITS)

Jump Kick, Teleport Uppercut, 4, Straight Missile

COMBO C (5 HITS)

Up Missile, Toward + 4, Teleport Uppercut, Toward + 4, 4

Expert Combos

COMBO A (7 HITS)

Up + 3, 4, Teleport Punch, Jump Kick, Metal Uppercut, 4, Straight Missile

COMBO B (9 HITS)

2, 1 Teleport Punch, 1, 2 Metal Uppercut, 1, Flame Burner

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COMBO C (11 HITS)

Up Missile, Jump Punch, 2, 1, Teleport Uppercut, Jump Kick, Metal Uppercut, Jump Kick, Metal Uppercut

Finishing Moves

ROBO-SEK

Toward, Down, Away, Toward, 3 (full screen)

THE SCARECROW
Down, Down, Forward, Back, 1

STAGE FATALITY
Down, Forward, Down, Block

Best Matchup

Sektor's best matchup is definitely Sheeva. Comboing a chain into his Up Missile (Above) is a huge pain in her side, because it forces her to sit still and not risk getting hit while trying to retaliate with one of her slow attacks. The Up Missile is also a clean counter to her Jump Stomp (it will hit her vertically on her way down), so even if Sheeva gets a read on when Sektor fires the missile (and tries to counter with a Jump Stomp), she still gets hit. Another obstacle for her to overcome is the Flame Burner. Because Sheeva is significantly larger than the rest of the cast, it's harder for her to get over this projectile, and it pushes her back to square one if she gets hit by it. Sektor can also take advantage of her slow Fireball start-up animation by Teleport Punching her from behind (on reaction) as her fireball leaves her hands. Sektor can basically have a ball with his projectiles and make it a real chore for Sheeva to score any kind of sustained damage.

Worst Matchup

Sektor's worst matchup is probably Nightwolf. At his most effective, Sektor fires a steady stream of Straight Missiles and Up Missiles from a distance, and Nightwolf lives for that exact situation. The Reflect and Absorb effectively shuts down Sektor's projectile game and allows Nightwolf to ultimately establish his own. Ironically, it is Sektor who has to take on the role of getting around an opponent's projectiles in this matchup. Nightwolf's Lightning is unblockable, which certainly doesn't help his situation, as it is hard enough to jump over the Arrow Shot (or even worse, the Multi Arrow) without getting anti-aired by the Shoulder. Without his projectile game in full swing, Sektor has to grin and bear a good old-fashioned "fisticuffs" with one of the most merciless characters in the game. This is one mission Sektor should almost always abort.

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SHANG TSUNG

Bio

A treacherous sorcerer who consumes the souls of his victims, Shang Tsung has played host to the last nine Mortal Kombat tournaments in EarthRealm, stacking the odds in favor of his master. Originally from EarthRealm, Shang Tsung and his magical abilities led him to discover the realm of Outworld. There he fell in league with its ruler, Shao Kahn, and pledged his life to him in return for enhanced power. He is now bound to the emperor by powerful dark magic. For centuries he has submissively done Shao Kahn's bidding. Should he fail in his mission to secure EarthRealm, he will suffer the emperor's wrath.

General Strategies

Shang's setups revolve around his massive projectile game. Everything juggles—you can even juggle an opponent with multiple fireballs from the ground. Shang Tsung's Toward + 3, 4 setup juggles off of ground projectiles if you are canceling Attack 4 into your desired move. Shang's X-Ray Attack covers a large range, and with meter, Shang has options that include enhanced projectile attacks that allow him to throw three fireballs and set up even more juggle attacks that take off huge amounts of damage. Up close, Shang's options are more limited, but with his keep-away game, characters that have Teleport moves work better against him.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Shang Tsung	165	7.5	8	7	6	6	7	5.5	5.5	5	6	5.5	5.5	6	5.5	5.5	7	4	6	6	6	X	7	6	5.5	6	6	7	7

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Basic Moves

Away + 1

Away + 2

Toward + 2

Toward + 3
This attack hits low.

Toward + 4

Down + 2

Away + 4

Chain Combos

1, 2, 1 The last hit of this chain hits overhead.

1, 2, 2

1, 3

2, 2, 1

Away + 1, 2, 1, 4 The third hit of this chain hits overhead.

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2, 2, Away + 4

Toward + 3, 4 The first hit of this chain hits low.

Toward + 4, 3, 4

Fast Tags (Tag Mode Only)

Away + 1, 2, 1, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

2, 2, 1, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

1, 2, Tag

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BURNING EVIL

Away + 1, 2, Tag

B-TRADE

2, 2, Tag

TWO OF A KIND

Toward + 4, 3, Tag

SPECIAL MOVES

FIRE SKULL

Away, Away, 1

This projectile has decent recovery and average speed. It's best used against an opponent as they are getting up, so you can hit them with one of your other Skull-projectile variations.

SOUL STEAL

Toward, Down, Away, 3

This not only drains a little bit of life from an opponent, but also it morphs Shang Tsung into the character he is fighting—with an added power boost.

UP SKULL (ABOVE)

Down, Up, 2

UP SKULL (BEHIND)

Down, Toward, 2

UP SKULL (IN FRONT)

Down, Back, 2

This lands from above onto an opponent's head and has excellent recovery. Combo a chain into this to really trick an opponent into thinking they can let go of Block and land a significant blow before the Up Skull comes crashing down on their head.

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GROUND SKULL (CLOSE)

Down, Up, 4

GROUND SKULL (MEDIUM)

Down, Away, 34

GROUND SKULL (FAR)

Down, Toward, 4

This is effectively the best projectile in the game. From the unpredictability to the great recovery time to the flexibility in options after a Ground Skull lands, this move is the absolute bane of most characters' existence. After landing a close Ground Skull, you can juggle with a Medium Up Skull and then again with a Far Ground Skull.

Enhanced Moves

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

TRIPLE SKULLS

Away, Away, 1 + Block

This move can be performed as a combo ender, in the middle of a chain, or simply to score block damage in a clutch.

GROUND ERUPTION

Down, Up, 4 + Block OR Down, Toward, 4 + Block OR Down, Away, 4 + Block

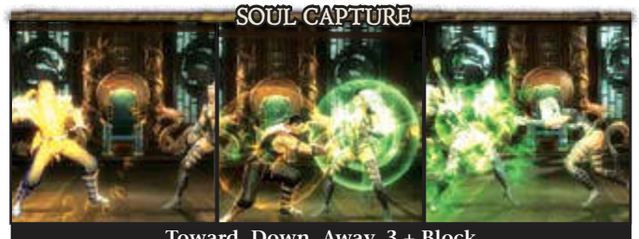
This works best after landing a Far Ground Skull, as it will juggle them from the opposite side of the screen to Shang's side, leaving them open for any attack on the way down.

SKULL STORM

Down, Back, 2 + Block OR Down, Toward, 2 + Block OR Down, Up, 2 + Block

This move drops three Skulls from the sky instead of one, forcing the opponent to stand still and block for fear of getting caught in the storm.

SOUL CAPTURE



Toward, Down, Away, 3 + Block

This works just like the normal Soul Steal, but this one has armor on it, so you can use it as an anti-air.

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Wake-Up Moves

SOUL STEAL

Down, Away, 3

Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

Away + 1, 2, 1 Fire Skull

COMBO B (5 HITS)

Neutral Jump Punch, Ground Skull (medium), Ground Eruption

COMBO C (5 HITS)

Ground Skull (close), Dash in, 1, 2, 1, Soul Steal

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Expert Combos

COMBO A (8 HITS)

Jump Punch, Away + 1, 2, 1, Dash in, 1, 2, 2 Soul Steal

COMBO B (10 HITS)

Jump Punch, Toward + 3, 4, Ground Skull (medium), Ground Skull (far), Ground Eruption, Ground Skull (close), Ground Skull (medium)

COMBO C (13 HITS)

Jump Punch, 2, 2, 1 Ground Skull (close), Ground Skull (medium), Ground Eruption, 1, 2, Soul Capture

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

YOUR SOUL IS MINE

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360) L2 + R2 (PS3)

This X-Ray Attack has pretty good distance, and you can combo it off of almost all of Shang's chains. In addition, you can use it to juggle after a Close Up Skull and a Medium Up Skull (or after both of them in succession). You can also use it as a very reliable wake-up attack.

Finishing Moves

BANG BANG!

Away, Down, Toward, 3 (sweep distance)

IDENTITY THEFT

Down, Down, Away, Down, 2

STAGE FATALITY

Up, Up, Back, 1

Best Matchup

Shang Tsung is a serious threat to any and everyone in the game, but one character who suffers above all in this match is Baraka. Baraka has to rely on luck almost exclusively in order to close the distance and stay in close quarters long enough to do significant damage. Shang Tsung's projectiles are just too much for Baraka to deal with. The Close Up Skull acts as a virtual force field through which Baraka cannot pass without getting hit in the face with a Triple Skull or any of the other Skull variations. All of them stagger Baraka back just far enough for Shang to reestablish a comfortable zoning distance. Because Shang can keep Baraka out all day with projectiles, his X-Ray will be on deck sooner rather than later. Once that happens, Baraka won't be able to even land a lucky jump kick thanks to the anti-air properties Shang's X-Ray possesses. This matchup is almost not fair.

Worst Matchup

Shang Tsung's most competitive matchup is unquestionably against Raiden. Raiden is the only character who can teleport behind an opponent from full-screen distance without committing to some sort of punch like Scorpion, Smoke, Ermac, and so on, must do. Shang can keep an eye out for other characters' Teleports so that he can block and punish them, but he has to worry about Raiden's immediate intentions once he appears behind him. "Will he sweep?" "Will he try to throw me?" "Will he start his Away + 3, 1, 2 chain?" These questions will eventually plague Shang in the heat of battle, and that becomes the crux of their fighting relationship. Due to the inevitability of Raiden Teleporting behind Shang while he's throwing a Triple Skull (and being able to punish him cleanly while he's facing the other direction throwing Skulls), Raiden has the edge in this matchup. This is a battle for the ages.

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SHEEVA

Bio

Sheeva is a member of the four-armed Shokan race. Her markings reveal that she is of the royal Draco lineage. Like all Shokan, she pledged her life to Shao Kahn, bringing honor to her race by serving him. During an attack by Edenian rebels on Shao Kahn's fortress, Sheeva fiercely protected Queen Sindel and prevented her capture. She was subsequently appointed Sindel's personal bodyguard until the queen's mysterious death in EarthRealm. Sheeva is now the master jailer of Shao Kahn's oppressive dungeon.

General Strategies

Sheeva is the largest and slowest playable character in Versus Mode matches, and because of her overall lack of mobility, she generally relies on unblockable grabs, tricks, and Ground Pounds. Sheeva's best gimmick is her ability to control her Jump Stomp. This allows her to appear behind or in front of the opponent, creating the possibilities for a vast array of mind games and grab setups. Sheeva's 1, 2, Away + 1 is a standard pop–up that she can use for juggles, but jumping with a combo starter into the first two hits of a chain combo, then canceling into a Ground Pound usually will hit an opponent; the current block-stun during a chain combo makes it much more difficult for an opponent to jump away from Sheeva's Ground Pound. If your opponent catches on, you have setup grabs in case they try jumping or dashing away. An excellent tactic is using her Toward + 4 Swinging Leg against opponents within range either after a successful Ground Pound or after reacting to an opponent's movement; this hits medium and does a considerable amount of damage.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Sheeva	105	4.5	5	4	3	3.5	4	3	3.5	4	4	3	3	4	4	5	5	3.5	4	4	4	3	X	4	3	4	4	4	5

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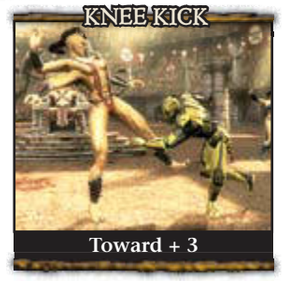
Basic Moves



Chain Combos

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SHEEVA RUSH

2, 1, 2, Away + 1

DEMOLISH

Toward + 2, Away + 1

TURMOIL

3, 3

REHABILITATED

Toward + 3, 2

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

PERFECT MATCH

1, 2, Away + 1, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

BETTER THAN

2, 1, 2, Toward + 1, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

TAG COMBOS (TAG MODE ONLY)

HELPING HANDS

1, 2, Tag

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PROTECTOR

1, Away + 2, Tag

DISTRUSTFUL

Away + 1, 2, Tag

DESTRUCTION

2, 1, 2, Tag

Special Moves

FIREBALL

Down, Toward, 2

Sheeva's Fireball is a fairly sluggish projectile. It has less-than-average recovery time on it also. It's best to combo her 2, 1, 2, Toward + 1 into this move

GROUND POUND

Down, Away, 4

This move is fairly easy to see and jump away from on reaction, but Sheeva can combo into it off of any chain. Perform 2, 1, 2, Ground Pound in conjunction with her 2, 1, 2, Toward + 1 and eventually one of the two will be the death of them.

GRAB N PUNCH

Away, Toward, 3

This is a slow grab maneuver but covers an okay amount of space. This is best used as a combo ender, for added style and damage.

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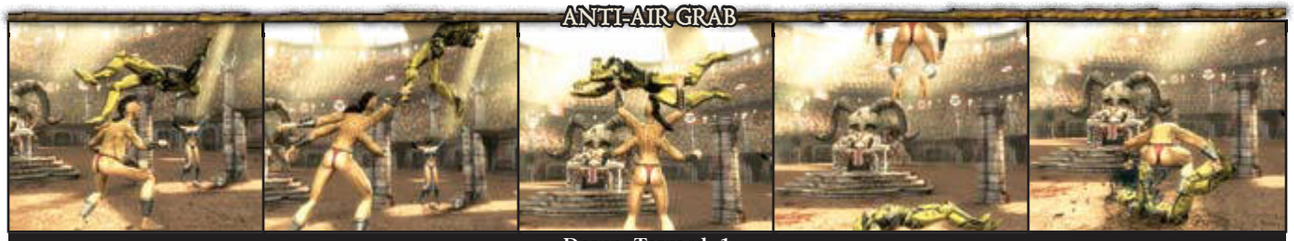
JUMP STOMP

Down, Up

The Jump Stomp isn't exactly safe to do (as it isn't the hardest thing to counter); however, the ability to steer it so that it can whiff in front or behind an opponent makes it very useful, especially when you combo it off of a chain. To perform it, hold Away or Toward to land in front or behind your opponent; neutral lands on top of your opponent at the spot where you first input the special move.

ANTI-AIR GRAB



Down, Toward, 1

As its name suggests, this move works perfect as an anti-air. It can also be a juggle combo ender.

LOW GRAB

Down, Away, 3

This works great up close if you've successfully swept or gone low on your opponent twice in a row. This also pops the opponent up, leaving them open to any juggle combos.

ENHANCED MOVES

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

FIRE BLAST

Down, Toward, 2 + Block

This works just like the normal version, only this version causes extra damage and knocks the opponent down.

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JUMP CRUSH

Down, Up + Block
Same as the regular Jump Stomp, just deals more damage.

GROUND SMASH

Down, Away, 4 + Block
This adds an extra hit (for more damage) to the Ground Pound.

UNTAMED FURY

Away, Toward, 3 + Block
This functions just as the normal one but deals extra hits and extra damage.

POWER ANTI-AIR

Down, Toward, 1 + Block
Same as the normal Anti-Air, just deals more damage.

ANTI-DUCK THROW

Down, Away, 3 + Block
This move is the same as the regular version, but just does more damage.

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Wake-Up Moves

Jump Stomp

Down, Up To appear behind the opponent, hold Away; to appear in front of the opponent, hold Toward.

Ground Pound

Down, Away, 4

Grab N Punch

Away, Toward, 3

Anti-Air Grab

Down, Toward, 1

Low Grab

Down, Away, 3

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Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (5 HITS)

2, 1, 2, Ground Pound

COMBO B (5 HITS)

Jump Punch, 1, 2, Away + 1, Dash in Uppercut

COMBO C (6 HITS)

Jump Punch, 2, 1, 2, Toward + 1, Fireball

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Expert Combos

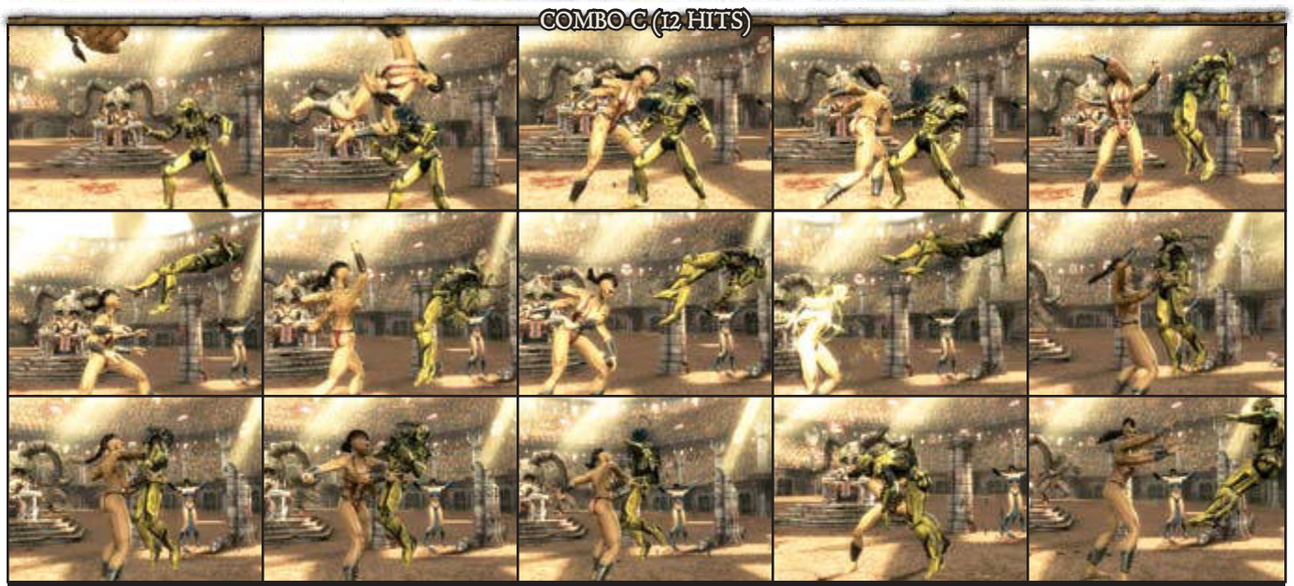
COMBO A (8 HITS)

Jump Punch, 1, 2, Away + 1, Dash in, 1, Power Anti-Air

COMBO B (10 HITS)

Jump Punch, 2, 1, 2, Toward + 1, Untamed Fury

COMBO C (12 HITS)



Jump Punch, 1, 2, Away + 1, Dash in, 2, 1, Untamed Fury

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

SLAM DANCE

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

The good news is that Sheeva's X-Ray hits from full-screen distance. The bad news is that it's easy to spot and jump out of. This means that the X-Ray is best done in the middle of a successful chain combo (such as 2, 1, 2, X-Ray). Or you can bait someone to throw a projectile and then do it, punishing them.

Finishing Moves

STRIPPED DOWN

Toward, Down, Down, Toward, 1 (sweep distance)

LEND A HAND

Toward, Away, Toward, Away, 4

STAGE FATALITY

Down, Down, Down, Down, 1

Best Matchup

Sheeva's best matchup is against Quan Chi. Quan Chi may be the only person Sheeva can win against in a projectile war due to his projectile being equally as slow but not having as good a recovery time as Sheeva's does. Sheeva's Jump Stomp has a home in this matchup, since Quan Chi has no special moves that beat it clean. In general, Quan Chi has no definite answer to any of Sheeva's attacks. This matchup can be a sloppy apprehensive match, or it can be a sound victory on Sheeva's end.

Worst Matchup

Sheeva's worst matchup is against Kung Lao. Kung Lao can be all over Sheeva like bees on honey and there's not much she can do about it. The Chained Fist is the cornerstone to Kung Lao's dominance in this matchup. He can land a jump punch into it and he can combo it into a Spin (which Sheeva cannot punish). Sheeva's moves are too slow to retaliate before Kung Lao jumps away to safety or mounts another assault. Sheeva can't even do her Ground Pound due to it being punishable on reaction with a Dive Kick. On top of that, her Jump Stomp cleanly loses to his Spin attack. This is one of the worst mismatches in the game.

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SINDEL

Bio

The mother of Kitana, Queen Sindel was forced into marriage with Shao Kahn when he conquered her realm of Edenia. In an attempt to thwart the emperor's designs on EarthRealm, she sacrificed herself. Her suicide created a magical ward preventing him from setting foot there. But now the barrier has been dissolved. Sindel has been resurrected, her mind enslaved by Shao Kahn. EarthRealm's former ally has become a deadly threat.

General Strategies

Sindel's vast array of low attacks and multitude of projectiles and juggles bring her to the top of the food chain when it comes to the world of competitive Mortal Kombat. Sindel has two excellent pop-up attacks that lead to major combos: Away + 1, 2 and her Away + 3, Toward + 2 chain, where the first hit looks low but actually hits high, and the second hit pops up and hits medium. A simple follow-up with a jump kick into an Air Fireball or Air Low Fireball will give you 20 to 24 percent without a combo starter. The real confusion is when Sindel is up close. Standing Attack 4, Toward + 3, and her Step Up Special Move all look strikingly similar, except one hits high and one hits medium, and the Step Up can be canceled from a Standing Attack 4, causing an opponent to guess (usually wrong) quite a bit.

A quick way to build Super Meter with Sindel is to cancel her Hover so that she looks as if she has barely left the ground. Sindel's spacing range with constant air, standard, and low projectiles create a nearly unbreakable wall that will test an opponent's patience. Even her midrange game is solid due to her Hair Whip, speeds, and constant offensive pressure. Fast-acting Attack 4, 4 is extremely hard to see coming because three of her moves are similar. You aren't expecting that second attack (knee) to pop out and knock you down, but it's coming one way or another during a match. Throw in a mixture of her Yell at midscreen and this makes for one solid character for a Sindel fan but chaos for an opponent.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Sindel	136	5.5	6	6	4	5	5.5	4	4.5	5	5	4.5	5.5	5	4	6	6	4	5	5	5.5	4	6	X	4	5	4.5	5.5	6

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Basic Moves

Chain Combos

CONQUEROR
Back + 2, 4

RISE TO POWER
3, 1, Back + 2

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Toward + 1, 2, 4

2, 1, 2 The second hit of this chain hits low.

2, 1, Away + 3 The second hit of this chain hits low.

3, 1, 1

Away + 3, Toward + 2 The second hit of this chain hits overhead.

4, 4, Up + 3

FAST TAGS (TAG MODE ONLY)

1, 1, Away + 2, Tag

Away + 1, 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

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CATACLYSM

Away + 2, Tag

GRACEFUL DEAD

Away + 3, Toward + 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

BOW TO ME

1, 1, Tag

WORTHLESS

Toward + 1, 2, Tag

MAJESTIC MASH

2, 1, Tag

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QUEEN'S SORROW

3, 1, Tag

THAT WAS FUN!

4, 4, Tag

Special Moves

FIREBALL

Down, Toward, 1 (can be done in the air)

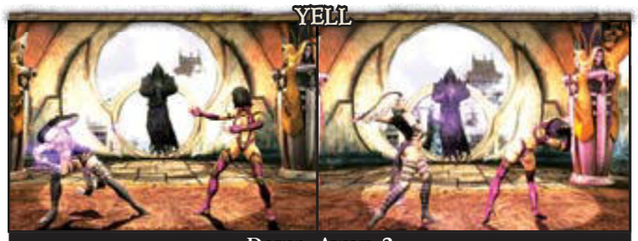
An average-speed projectile with average recovery. The air version flies at a very wide angle and can be performed close to the ground so there's not a lot of recovery there.

LOW FIREBALL

Down, Toward, 3 (can be done in the air)

Not unlike Liu Kang, opponents have to respect her low fireball, from afar and up close.

YELL



Down, Away, 2

This move has a fairly long windup animation, but when landed, it leaves the opponent staggered, left open for any attack Sindel chooses.

HOVER

Down, Down, Up (press Block to go back to the ground)

Sindel can use this to throw Fireballs while levitating, but the real benefit of this move is to cancel out of it by pressing Block as soon as you leave the ground. This makes an opponent wonder if you're going to commit to a full Hover. It's in that moment of hesitation that you can attack with any of your chain combos into another Hover cancel.

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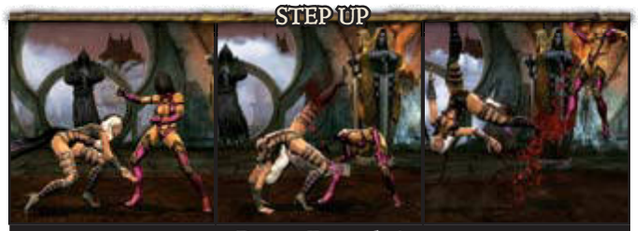
HAIR WHIP

Down, Toward, 2
This makes for a very flashy combo ender and juggle ender.

STEP UP



Down, Toward, 4
This also is a very flashy way to end combos.

Enhanced Moves

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

POWER FIREBALL

Down, Toward, 1 + Block (can be done in the air)
This works just like her normal Fireball, except it deals one more hit and deals more damage.

LOW FIRE

Down, Toward, 4 + Block (can be done in the air)
Same as the regular Low Fire, but with an extra hit and some extra damage.

SCREAM

Down, Away, 2 + Block
This move looks just like the Yell, only you can dash cancel out of it if you hold the Punch button down.

HAIR TOSS

Down, Toward, 2 + Block
This version adds two extra slams onto the original and adds style and damage.

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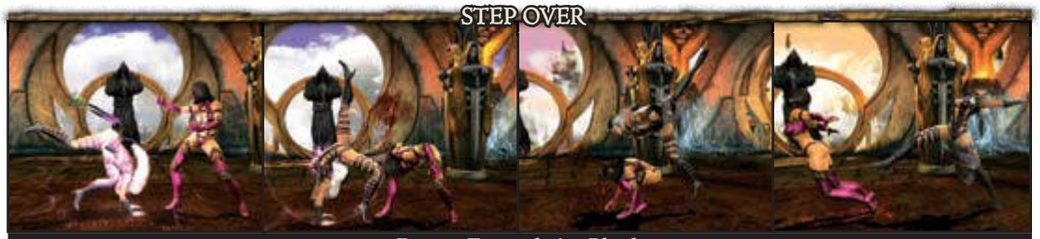
STEP OVER

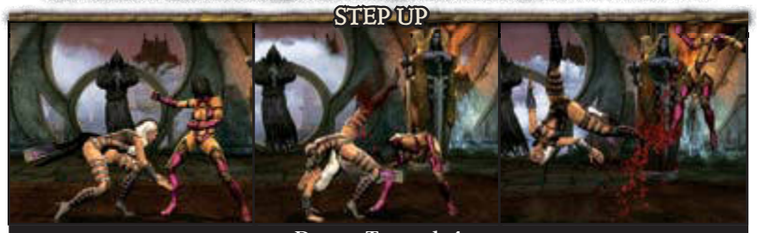


Down, Toward, 4 + Block

The flashiness and damage output is taken up another notch for this move. This is best used in the middle of a chain combo.

Wake-Up Moves

STEP UP



Down, Toward, 4

Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

Jump Punch, 4, 4, Air Fireball

COMBO B (5 HITS)

3, 1, Yell, Away + 2, 4

COMBO C (7 HITS)

Away + 3, Toward + 4, Dash in, Toward + 1, 2, Step Up

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Expert Combos

COMBO A (8 HITS)

Jump Punch, 3, 1, Yell, Neutral Jump Punch, Dash in, Away + 1, 2

COMBO B (10 HITS)

Away + 3, Toward + 2, Jump Punch, 2, 1, Step Over

COMBO C (16 HITS)

Jump Punch, 2, 1, Yell, 4, 4, 2, 2, Dash in, 2, 2, 2, Hair Toss

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

QUEEN B

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

Sindel's X-Ray travels deceptively far (almost half-screen distance) and hits low. This means if Sindel has an X-Ray built up and an opponent isn't crouching within a little less than half-screen distance, they're most likely going to lose some life. This can also be used as an almost guaranteed anti-air.

Finishing Moves

MIGRAINE

Away, Toward, Down, Toward, 1 (sweep distance)

MOUTHFUL

Away, Toward, Up, 2

STAGE FATALITY

Down, Down, Down, 1

Best Matchup

Sindel's best matchup is probably against Sheeva. Sheeva is so tall that it's hard for her to get out of the way of the Air Fireball. The more Fireball abuse, the more meter gets built, and when that happens, the chances of Sindel landing an X-Ray go through the roof thanks to it being a clean counter for Sheeva's Jump Stomp. Beyond the keep-away game, Sindel can also give Sheeva hell up close. Comboing chains into Hover Cancels take Sheeva out of the loop big-time, and she can't pinpoint when she should try to retaliate or with what. Sindel is in the driver's seat in this matchup, no question.

Worst Matchup

Sindel's worst matchup is probably with Nightwolf. Sindel at her best is airborne, throwing projectile after projectile. Nightwolf's Reflect throws this game plan out the window and allows him to Launch Multi Arrows, Lightning, and Thunder Storms at Sindel without much incident. Sindel has to inch her way close to Nightwolf and pick her shots, but you risk being caught coming forward by the Eclipse Kick. Nightwolf wins this matchup very comfortably.

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SMOKE

Bio

Originating from Prague, Tomas Vrbada was recruited by the Lin Kuei for his impressive ability to escape capture. Able to transform into a wisp of smoke, his talent has proved useful on countless missions. Smoke has no memory of his childhood. His only family is the Lin Kuei, more specifically the younger Sub-Zero, who is like a brother to him. It has been Smoke's hope that through the Lin Kuei he will discover his past—and the origin of his power.

General Strategies

Smoke's big damage stems from his Smoke Cloud, which can be followed up with well-timed juggles or a simple jump kick to Air Throw combo. Smoke Cloud is very fast and tracks an opponent where they are at on the screen at the time; luckily for opponents, they can block it high. Smoke's 3, 2 chain combo is easily followed by dashing up attacks, Smoke Cloud into jump kick/air throw, or other wild follow-ups. If an opponent is catching on to habitual Smoke Away teleports behind them, you can perform an enhanced Shake, which as a parry lasts for around five seconds and counters everything, including projectiles and throws. Bread-and-butter basic combos stem from a combo starter into a 3, Down + 1, 2 chain combo that can be followed up twice with the same combo, but before the last hits, you can utilize a jump kick into Air Throw.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Smoke	153	7	7	6.5	5	6	5.5	5	5	5.5	6	4.5	5	5	4	5.5	7	4	6	5.5	6	4.5	7	6	X	6	6	5.5	7

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Basic Moves

Away + 1

Away + 3

Down + 2

Away + 4

Toward + 4

Chain Combos

1, 1, 2

1, 3

Away + 1, 4

2, 1, 4

3, Down + 1, 2
The second hit of this chain hits overhead.

ON FIRE
3, 2

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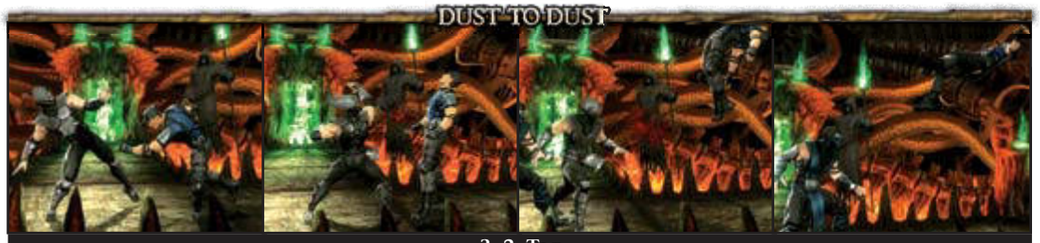
Fast Tags (Tag Mode Only)

Ashes to Ashes

3, Down + 1, 2, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

Dust to Dust

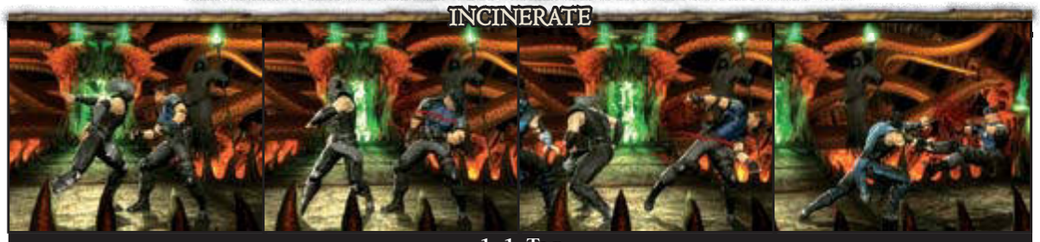


3, 2, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

Incinerate



1, 1, Tag

Immolation

2, 1, Tag

Ignite

3, Down + 1, Tag

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Special Moves

Shake

Away, Toward, 1 (hold 1 to charge)

This acts as a parry and works only on projectiles. It can parry projectiles from up to full screen.

Smoke Cloud

Down, Away, 2

This is one of the best projectiles in the game. It can be comboed off of chains such as 2, 1, and Away + 2, 3.

Air Throw

Throw in air

This is ideal to use as a juggle ender, preferably after a jump kick.

Teleport

Down, Away, 4 (can be done in the air)

This is the second fastest Teleport (next to Raiden's), and Smoke shouldn't be afraid to abuse it!

Smoke Away

Toward, Away, 3

This move goes through projectiles.

Smoke Toward

Away, Toward, 3

Invisibility

Down, Up, 3

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Enhanced Moves

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

Vibration

Away, Toward, 1 + Block

This move is great against an aggressive opponent. It parries projectiles, regular moves, and throws. The longer you keep someone at bay, the more excited they are going to be when they step up front.

Vanish

Down, Up, 3 + Block

This turns Smoke completely invisible as opposed to partially invisible like the normal version.

Smoke Bomb

Down, Away, 2 + Block

This works just like the Smoke Cloud but with bigger radius of smoke.

Smokeport

Down, Away, 4 + Block (can be done in the air)

This adds another attack for added flash when you end your combos.

Phase Away

Toward, Away, 1 + Block

The normal version goes through projectiles. This version goes through everything.

Phase Toward

Away, Toward, 1 + Block

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Wake-Up Moves

SHAKE (ACTS AS A PARRY)

Away, Toward, 1 (hold 1 to charge)

INVISIBILITY

Down, Up, 3

SMOKE AWAY

Toward, Away, 3

SMOKE TOWARD

Away, Toward, 3

Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

2, 1, Smoke Teleport

COMBO B (6 HITS)

Jump Punch, 2, Smoke Cloud, Uppercut

COMBO C (6 HITS)

3, Down + 1, 2, Jump Kick, Smoke Teleport

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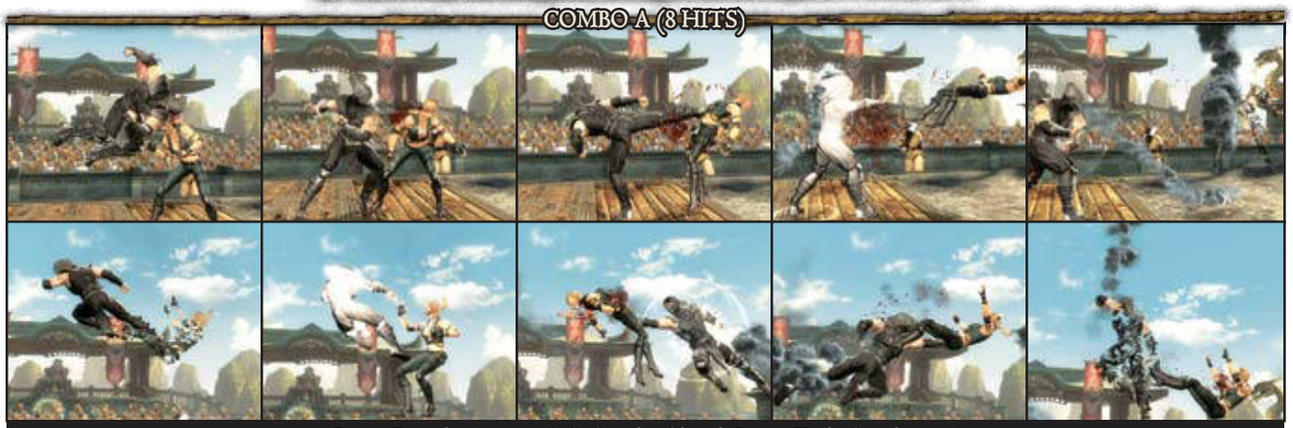
Expert Combos

COMBO A (8 HITS)



Jump Punch, Away + 2, 3, Smoke Cloud, Jump Kick, Smokeport

COMBO B (8 HITS)

Jump Punch, 2, 1, Smoke Cloud, Neutral Jump Punch, Jump Kick, Air Throw

COMBO C (11 HITS)

Jump Punch, 3, Down + 1, 2, Dash in, 3, Down + 1, Smoke Bomb, Jump Kick, Air Throw

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

BURN OUT

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

Smoke's X-Ray is similar to Sub-Zero's in that it's chargeable and you can dash out of it (by holding the Punch button and hitting Toward, Toward or Back, Back). You can land it after Smoke's 3, Down + 1, 2 chain and even as an anti-air that hits from the other side!

Finishing Moves

SMOKED OUT

Away, Toward, Away, Toward, 1 (sweep distance)

TREMOR

Away, Away, Down, Toward, 2

STAGE FATALITY

Forward, Up, Up, 1

Best Matchup

Smoke's best matchup may be against Quan Chi. Quan Chi can't last 10 seconds in a firefight with Smoke due to the speed of the Smoke Cloud; therefore, Quan Chi's next objective should be to counter Smoke's Smoke Cloud with a well-timed Skydrop. Not happening. In the event that Quan Chi is already airborne and ready to hit Smoke with the Jump Stomp, Smoke can Teleport completely out of danger. Sometimes he can even counter the Jump Stomp with the Teleport Punches, depending on how late the song is.

Worst Matchup

Smoke's worst match is probably against the god of thunder, Raiden. Smoke can't keep Raiden at bay with the Smoke Cloud. It's just not a possibility. What Smoke wants to do is get enough meter to perform a Vibration attack when Raiden teleports behind him (since Raiden generally likes to mount offense as soon as he appears behind an opponent). If he can get a couple bars of meter without having to use it for a breaker, then Smoke can win. If not, Raiden will almost certainly win with high-damaging combos.

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SONYA

Evo

As a girl, Sonya idolized her father, a U.S. Marine. When he embarked on a covert operation and never returned, she vowed to honor his memory. She joined the Marines and pushed herself hard, quickly rising in rank. Sonya's impulsiveness didn't win her many friends, but her skills and loyalty gained the respect and admiration of all who fought beside her. Though she has never given up her quest to uncover the truth behind her father's disappearance, she realizes that she might never see him again. Now Sonya finds herself caught up in the mysterious Mortal Kombat tournament. Like her father, she, too, could become a casualty of war.

General Strategies

Sonya's Air Drop (think Air Dive Kick) can be used as a combo starter and is extremely quick. However, do not incessantly do this move because it can be blocked, and Sonya can be punished afterward. In addition, everything done after Sonya's Military Stance can all be blocked low, so there aren't any suitable high/low mix-ups for her. Sonya's best starter pop-up combo is Away + 2, 1, Toward + 2 with the second hit hitting mid. She can deal some pretty hefty damage off it with low-blocking opponents being caught with the second hit if they are not looking out for it.

A great tool for Sonya is her ability to use an X-Ray Attack off of any juggle. Sonya can handle projectile wars with her Energy Ring Blast, and the enhanced version of this move can't be ducked. Besides having one of the top uppercuts in the game, Sonya can also use her Arc Kick and Leg Grab, which are useful as decent anti-airs, especially on wake-up. Players will have trouble with her Kartwheel because it hits as an overhead, allowing Sonya to begin a crazy amount of juggles or to set up her X-Ray Attack.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Sonya	134	6	6	5.5	5	5.5	5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4	5	5	4.5	4.5	6	4	5	5	5.5	4	6	5	4	X	5	4.5	6

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Basic Moves

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Away + 2 (from Military Stance) This move is a pop-up.

Away + 4

Chain Combos

1, 1, 2

1, 1, 4

2, 1, Away + 3

2, 1, Away + 4

Toward + 2, 2, 4 The last hit of this chain hits overhead.

Away + 2, 1, Toward + 2

3, 1, 2

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BEAT UP

3, 1, 4

PULL OUT

4, 4

Fast Tags (Tag Mode Only)

SWITCH OFF

2, Tag (from Military Stance)

FATAL KISS

Down, Away, 1, Tag

WINDMILL

Down, Toward, 3, Tag

This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

SURPRISE

Back + 2, 1, Forward +2, Tag

Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

LICK MY BOOTS

1, 1, Tag

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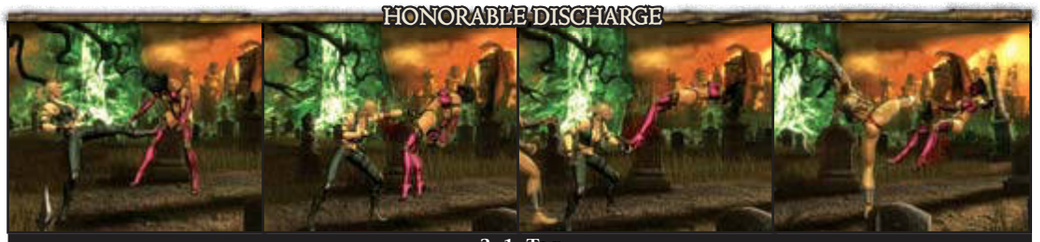
SPECIAL FORCED

2, 1, Tag

TOUGH LOVE

Toward + 2, 2, Tag

HONORABLE DISCHARGE



3, 1, Tag

SPECIAL MOVES

ENERGY RING BLAST

Away, Toward, 2

A projectile with pretty good speed, enabling Sonya to keep up in a firefight against almost anyone.

LEG GRAB

Away, Toward, 4

This move makes for a great combo or juggle ender. It's best not used by itself due to the very long recovery time.

KART WHEEL

Down, Toward, 3

This move pops the opponent up, and you can combo it off of any chain.

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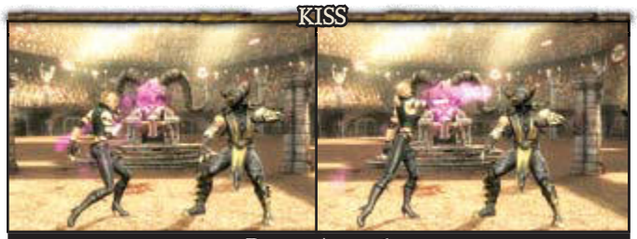
KISS



Down, Away, 1

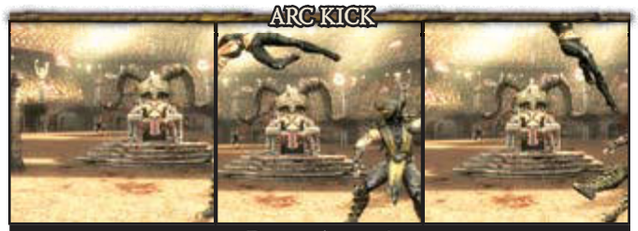
The classic we all know and love, this move staggers the opponent and leaves them open for a follow-up combo. Kiss has a pretty significant amount of wind-up before it hits the opponent. Because of that, Sonya can't combo into it. This is best used after landing a Sweep so that the opponent has no choice but to roll away or stand up directly in its line of fire.

AIR THROW

Throw (while in the air)

This catches the opponent out of the air and slams them onto the ground. Air Throw is best used after her Lift Off attack from the Military Stance.

ARC KICK



Down, Away, 4

AIR DROP

Down + 4 (while in the air)

This is a very quick air-to-ground attack that can act as a chain combo initiator (like a jump punch). If landed on an airborne opponent, it knocks them backward onto the floor and gives Sonya enough time to dash up and apply pressure as they wake up.

ENHANCED MOVES

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

RINGS OF JUSTICE

Away, Toward, 2 + Block

This move shoots two rings instead of one, with the second one hitting low. This is one of the best moves in the game in a clutch situation from a distance.

KRAZY LEGS

Away, Toward, 4 + Block

This functions just like the Leg Grab only with an extra slam for added flair and more damage.

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ARC WAVE

Down, Away, 4 + Block
This works like the regular version, just with added damage.

KART WHEEL BASH

Down, Toward, 3 + Block
Same as the normal Windmill, just with added damage.

DEADLY KISS

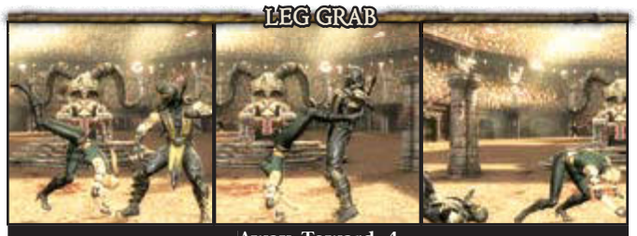
Down, Away, 2 + Block (hold 2 to charge)
You can cancel out of this version of Kiss by dashing toward or backward. Train your opponent to fear Kiss by performing Sonya's chain combos into it; then when they least expect it, dash out of a Deadly Kiss and either throw them, jump over them, or start another chain combo.

AIR STRIKES

Down + 4 + Block (while in the air)
This move does significantly more damage than its normal version, but you cannot initiate a chain combo off of it, as it causes a stagger reaction.

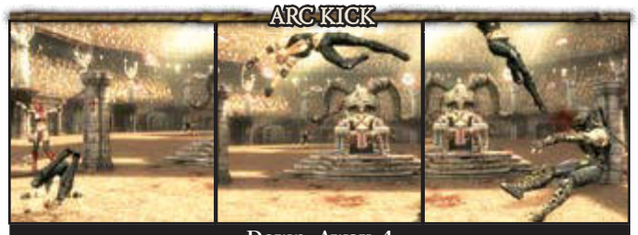
WAKE-UP MOVES

LEG GRAB



Away, Toward, 4

ARC KICK



Down, Away, 4

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KART WHEEL

Down, Toward, 3

Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

1, 1, 4, Energy Ring Blast

COMBO B (5 HITS)

Military Stance, Away + 2, Neutral Jump Punch, Jump Kick, Sonya Air Throw

COMBO C (5 HITS)

3, 1, 2, Leg Grab

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Expert Combos

COMBO A (7 HITS)

Jump Punch, 3, 1, dash in, 1, 1, 4, Energy Ring Blast

COMBO B (8 HITS)

Jump Punch, Air Drop, 2, 1, Military Stance, 3, Dash in, ducking 1, Krazy Legs

COMBO C (12 HITS)

Jump Punch, Air Drop, 2, 1, Kartwheel, Dash in, 1, 1, Dash in, 1, 1, 4, Arc Wave

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

SF BEAT DOWN

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

Sonya's X-Ray Attack is best used in the middle of a chain combo. Using it in a juggle is a little risky due to its tendency to whiff the fourth hit, which is required to initiate the entire X-Ray sequence. It does pretty good damage and makes for a great wake-up attack.

Finishing Moves

SCISSOR SPLIT

Down, Down, Away, Toward, 1 (one jump distance away)

KUT-THROAT

Down, Away, Toward, Back, 4

STAGE FATALITY

Away, Toward, Down, 2

Best Matchup

Not unlike her Special Forces teammate Jax, Sonya is a very in-your-face type of character who can apply an almost suffocating pressure that can overwhelm an opponent. Sheeva is one character who has a very hard time getting Sonya off of her once she's in close quarters. With the ability to go low, throw, or start another chain combo off of a Military Stance dash cancel, this matchup can leave Sheeva guessing when to let go of block. Sheeva's moves are too slow to break Sonya's offensive momentum, and not only can Sonya perform an Air Drop on reaction to her Ground Pound, but also her Arc Kick counters Sheeva's Jump Stomp clean. If you've ever been to a picnic and encountered a bee that just won't leave you alone while you try to eat, you know precisely how Sheeva feels when matched up against Sonya.

Worst Matchup

Sonya can match up well with almost anyone, but one character who can annoy her to no end is the Shaolin warrior Kung Lao. Sonya is best when she's inside working an aggressive offense, keeping the opponent guessing where she's going to attack. Kung Lao has a direct solution to this dilemma by way of his Spin attack. This shuts down all close-quarters offense Sonya can initiate and makes her want to keep some distance. Once a distance is established, Kung Lao can lay a Ground Hat on the floor and use it as backup to mount his own offense. He can also perform his Dive Kick to counter Sonya's Energy Rings on reaction from a distance. Sonya's goal for victory over Kung Lao is to bait him into performing a Spin and punish it. However, this is easier said than done. This is an outright frustrating matchup for Sonya.

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STRYKER

Bio

One of New York City's finest, Stryker is a one-man SWAT team. He was once decorated for single-handedly thwarting the terrorists in the famous Greenberg Tower Incident, and again for rescuing passengers of a speeding cross-town bus rigged to explode. He was unprepared, however, for the magical portal that spewed forth creatures from another realm—a realm he didn't even know existed. So far, his kombat training has gotten him through the first wave of creatures. It'll take more than rocket-launching Tarkatans to stop this die-hard cop.

General Strategies

At first glance, Stryker looks to be slow and useless due to his low volume of moves, but one move can make a character, and in this case, Gun Shot's ability to fake out foes and it's ability to reach the opposite end of the screen make Stryker a tough character to read—the bullets do not appear in the middle of the screen; they appear only as your opponent is getting hit. This allows Stryker a ton of time to confuse you, causing you to guess and make crucial mistakes that inexperienced players will not be able to overcome. Stryker's Away + 1, 2, 2 pop-up sets up multiple juggles, including an "old school" combo that *Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3* players will fondly remember. He can also combo his Roll Toss from many of his juggle setups, including a decent setup from a Low Attack (Away + 3, 2).

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Stryker	133.5	4.5	6	5.5	4.5	5.5	5	4	4.5	5.5	5	4.5	4	4.5	4.5	5	6	4	5.5	4.5	5.5	4	6	5.5	4	5	X	5	6

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Basic Moves

Chain Combos

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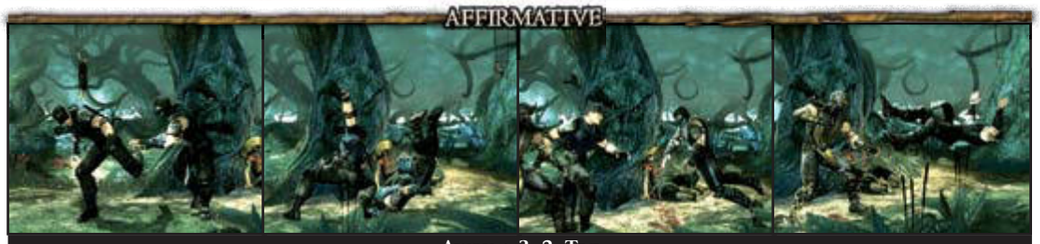
Away + 1, Away + 4

Away + 3, 2 The second hit of this chain hits overhead.

Fast Tags (Tag Mode Only)

Away + 1, 2, 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

Away + 2, Toward + 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.



Away + 3, 2, Tag
This pops the opponent up, leaving them vulnerable to any attacks from the character being tagged in.

Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

1, 1, Tag

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OFFICER FRIENDLY

Away + 1, 2, Tag

DON'T MOVE!

2, 3, Tag

ASSAULT AND BATTERY

Away + 2, Tag

SPECIAL MOVES

HIGH GRENADE TOSS

Down, Away, 2

Use this when you think your opponent wants to jump at you.

LOW GRENADE TOSS

Down, Away, 1

One of the slowest projectiles in the game, yet it still manages to hit its target. The arc of the Low Grenade Toss is such that it's hard to jump over, yet difficult to get under.

BATON SWEEP

Down, Away, 4

This is a somewhat slow but gratifying move that is best done in the middle of a chain combo.

GUN SHOT (CAN BE HELD OR DASH CANCELED)

Away, Toward, 1

This is technically the fastest projectile in the game and is a great zoning tool. A nice function of this move is the ability to dash cancel out of it by holding the Punch button and dashing forward or backward to break out of it.

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Away, Toward, 4
This works great in projectile wars, as it goes under almost anything thrown from a distance.

ENHANCED MOVES

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

Down, Away, 4 + Block
This functions like the normal version just with a very gratifying extra hit for more damage.

Down, Away, 2 + Block
This makes it twice as hard to jump over the grenades.

Down, Away, 1 + Block

Away, Toward, 1 + Block
This version of the Gun Shot is great for juggling! Perform this after landing Stryker's Away + 1, 2, 2 combo and see how you feel.

Away, Toward, 4 + Block
This works just like the normal version, just with extra damage.

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Wake-Up Moves

Roll Toss

Away, Toward, 4

Baton Sweep

Down, Away, 4

Intermediate Combos

Combo A (4 Hits)

Jump Punch, Away + 3, 2, Dash in, Uppercut

Combo B (5 Hits)

Jump Punch, 2, 1, Roll Toss

Combo C (5 Hits)

Away + 1, 2, 2, Gun Shot

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Expert Combos

COMBO A (8 HITS)

Jump Punch, Away + 2, Toward + 2, Dash in, 2, 3, 2

COMBO B (11 HITS)

Away + 3, 2, Dash in, 1, 1, Bang Bang, Dash in, 1, Roll Out

COMBO C (16 HITS)

Away + 1, 2, 2, Gun Shot, Dash in, 1, Bang Bang, Dash in, 1, 1 Bang Bang

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

Stryker's X-Ray doesn't have a lot of range or a lot of ways to land it. But he makes up for it with its damage output. One juggle combo that this X-Ray can be used in is Away + 1, 2, 2, Dash in, 1, 1, X-Ray. Another way to use it is as an anti-air. It's not a sure thing, but it can suck people out of the air.

Finishing Moves

Toward, Down, Toward, 3 (sweep distance)

HAVE A BLAST
Down, Toward, Down, Toward, Block

STAGE FATALITY
Forward, Up, Up, 4

Best Matchup

Stryker's best matchup is against Sheeva. Stryker can keep the Shokan warrior at bay with the Gun Shot used in moderation with his Low Grenade Toss. Sheeva's size makes it hard for her to get over the bullets. If Sheeva gets into closer range, then Stryker can cancel out of the Gun Shot and attack her in efforts to land a combo to put her back at full-screen distance. Rinse and repeat.

Worst Matchup

Stryker's worst matchup is Shang Tsung. Even though Stryker's Gun is good enough to trade projectiles with Shang, Shang still walks away with his hand raised. In this matchup, the Triple Skull is Shang's best friend, not the Ground Skulls. Stryker can trade hits with a Far Ground Skull, and Shang won't be able to juggle him off of them because he'll be stuck in a brief stagger reaction from taking a bullet to the face. With Shang using his horizontal projectiles a bit more than usual in this matchup, he'll expect Stryker to land a Roll Out. When Stryker goes for it, Shang Tsung can perform a Soul Steal on reaction. Shang just has more to work with in this bout.

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SUB-ZERO

Bio

An assassin of the Lin Kuei clan, Kuai Liang commands the power of ice and cold. Unlike other members of his clan, he and his older brother, Bi-Han, were abducted as children by the Lin Kuei and trained in the techniques of assassination throughout their lives. Though his code name is Tundra, he has now assumed the mantle of Sub-Zero to honor his brother after Bi-Han's mysterious death. With the help of his fellow Lin Kuei Smoke, Sub-Zero tirelessly hunts the one who killed his brother.

General Strategies

You can play hundreds of matches in *Mortal Kombat*, but the one character who is most likely to "time out" the game at high-level play (two-player game where the timer runs out) is Sub-Zero. Ice Clone is his main setup, slowing down the game considerably because opponents are wary to jump at him based on the probability of combo setups. Standard Ice Clones stay on the screen for three seconds, whereas the enhanced version (which requires one bar of Super Meter) stays out for five seconds. Sub-Zero's corner combos are ludicrous, and once he leads you into the corner, you will have a hard time getting out. Standing 2 is an annoying juggle starter that leads you to believe you are helpless in a fight in getting close to him, and Subby's Slide has near complete invincibility around his body when he is sliding at you, making it a very unorthodox-looking anti-air.

Character Tier Preview

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	Cyrax	Ermac	Jade	Jax	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Sub-Zero	133.5	5.5	6	5	4.5	4.5	5	5	5	5.5	5	4.5	5	5.5	4	4.5	6	4	4.5	5	5	3	6	4.5	4.5	5.5	5	X	6

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Basic Moves

Away + 1

Down + 2

Toward + 4
This move hits overhead.

Away + 4

Away + 2
By holding Attack 2 when doing this move, you can charge it for two seconds, resulting in an unblockable freeze attack. You can also cancel out of it by performing a forward or backward dash at any point during the charge. This attack by itself with no charge hits overhead.

Chain Combos

1, 1

1, 3, Toward + 4 The third hit of this chain hits overhead.

1, 3, Away + 4 The third hit of this chain hits low.

Away + 1, 2, 1 The second hit of this chain hits overhead.

Away + 1, 2, 4 The second hit of this chain hits low and the third hits low.

2, 1, 2

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2, 1, 4

Toward + 4, 2 + 1
The first hit of this chain hits overhead.

3, Toward + 4
The second hit of this chain hits overhead.

2, 2, 2 The third hit of this chain hits overhead.

2, 2, 4

Fast Tags (Tag Mode Only)

2, 1, Tag

Tag Combos (Tag Mode Only)

1, 3, Tag

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ARCTIC ASSAULT

Away + 1, 2, Tag

ABILITY TO FREEZE

2, 2, Tag

SPECIAL MOVES

ICEBALL

Down, Toward, 3

SLIDE

Away, Toward, 4

This move has pretty good speed and travels almost full screen. It also hits low and goes under just about any normal projectile. It also makes for a great combo ender.

ICE CLONE

Down, Away, 1

This move stays active for three seconds. Great for controlling space.

ICE PUDDLE

Down, Away, 3

This is a fairly hard move to land by itself, but not if you can make your opponent want to block low most of the time.

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Enhanced Moves

The following moves use one bar of super meter.

Icebeam

Down, Toward, 3 + Block

This version of the Iceball covers the complete length of the screen, making it impossible to jump over. In addition, it freezes the opponent for a longer duration, making it easier to catch up to a frozen opponent from afar.

Ground Freeze

Down, Away, 3 + Block

This version of the Ice Puddle reaches full-screen distance and freezes you for a longer duration when connected. Due to the relative slow speed it takes for the entire floor to become frozen, it's fairly easy to react to and jump away from. However, when you couple it with the Ice Clone, you can create situations in which your opponent will not want to jump at all. Use those two moves in conjunction with each other and it becomes easier and easier to land the Ground Freeze.

Ice Statue

Down, Away, 1 + Block

This version of the Ice Clone has the same benefits of the normal version but stays active for a whopping five seconds instead of three.

Power Slide

Away, Toward, 4 + Block

This version of the Slide gives you an extra hit and more damage. Not only is it a great combo ender (like the normal Slide), but also when landed, it knocks the opponent to the opposite side of the screen. Use it to turn the tides when cornered.

Wake-Up Moves

Slide

Away, Toward, 4

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X-Ray Attacks

This attack uses three bars of Super Meter.

DEEP FREEZE

3 + 4 + Block Simultaneously OR LT + RT (Xbox 360)/L2 + R2 (PS3)

This X-Ray Attack travels almost full screen, and you can combo it off of any standing attack hit or any hit of any chain combo. This X-Ray is also unique in that you can charge it for up to five seconds by holding Block after you've activated the X-Ray. This attack is different from other characters' X-Ray Attacks in that Sub-Zero can cancel out of it by dashing forward or away during the charge, not unlike his Force Claw move.

Intermediate Combos

COMBO A (4 HITS)

Ice Puddle, Away + 1, 2, 1

COMBO B (5 HITS)

2, 2, Iceball, Toward + 3, 4

COMBO C (6 HITS)

1, Iceball, 2, 1, 4, Slide

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Expert Combos

COMBO A (8 HITS)

Jump Punch, Away + 1, 2, Iceball, 2, 2, 4, Slide

COMBO B (8 HITS)

Toward + 4, Iceball, neutral Jump Punch, Dash, 2, 1, 2, 2, 2

COMBO C (9 HITS)

2, 1, Ducking 1, Ice Beam, Jump Punch, Dash, 2, 2, Power Slide

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Finishing Moves

Have an Ice Day

Away, Toward, Down, Toward, 4 (sweep distance)

Spinal Smash

Down, Away, Down, Toward, 2

Stage Fatality

Forward, Down, Away, 2

Best Matchup

Sub-Zero's best matchup is Sheeva. The Ice Clone is the bane of Sheeva's existence in this bout. It freezes her Jump Stomp (she lands right on top of it) and forces her to use her Fireball and Ground Pound. The problem is that her Fireball and Ground Pound have such slow animation that Sub-Zero can chuck the Iceball at his leisure and be confident that it will eventually trade with whichever special move she does (before her animations recover). Also, since Sheeva has no way to get past the Ice Clone, Sub-Zero can play the role of the aggressor, bullying his way forward using his Ice Clone as backup. Once he's backed her near the corner, the Ice Clone followed by a Ground Freeze puts her into an almost no-win situation. This is a match in which Sub-Zero can be as liberal as he wants with his special moves. It is definitely one of the most annoying experiences in the game for Sheeva players.

Worst Matchup

Sub-Zero's worst matchup is Nightwolf. One of Sub-Zero's strengths is the ability to use his Ice Clone as a force field in order to throw his Iceball without any worry of it getting jumped over. With Nightwolf, that game plan doesn't work. If Sub-Zero does an Ice Clone, Nightwolf can reflect an Iceball, and he can perform an enhanced Lightning attack to force Sub-Zero to jump away (since the Lightning is unblockable). Once Sub-Zero is apprehensive about throwing the Iceball, Nightwolf can capitalize on it with his own projectile game. This forces Sub-Zero to come forward instead of being defensive, and when that happens, Nightwolf is at liberty to catch him coming forward with his Power Charge. Overall, this is an uncomfortable match for Sub-Zero due to his special moves having no relevance at a high level. It's an uphill battle that requires Sub-Zero to think outside of the box in order for him to be successful.

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KOMBAT CODES & UNLOCKABLES

KOMBAT CODES

During the Versus screen before a match, pressing Attacks 1, 2, and 4 on your controller or joystick correspond to the following code chart. Press the corresponding buttons the correct number of times listed for each player.

NOTE

In order to properly enter the Kombat Codes please read the following example:

If the Kombat kode for Player 1 is 466, then Player 1 must press Attack 1 four times, Attack 2 six times, and Attack 4 six times. For Kombat Codes that call out for "0", don't press the corresponding Attack button at all and instead move on to the next number in the Kode sequence.

Player 1 and Player 2 Codes will not always be the same, so keep a close eye on both Codes when playing with a friend.

Kombat Codes

#	P1	P2	Code Name	Description
1	4,6,6	4,6,6	Unlimited Super Meter	Super Meter never depletes.
2	0,1,0	0,1,0	Throwing Encouraged	This prints out messages whenever a throw is performed.
3	1,0,0	1,0,0	Throwing Disabled	Disables all throws.
4	0,2,0	0,2,0	Blocking Disabled	Blocks are disabled.
5	4,0,4	4,0,4	Powerbars Disabled	Hide the powerbars and Super Meters.
6	3,0,0	3,0,0	Silent Kombat	Mute all sounds.
7	3,0,3	3,0,3	Quick Uppercut Recovery	Set Breakout for all uppercuts to be 3 to 5 frames after the impact frame.
8	0,2,2	0,2,2	Dark Kombat	Fades everything out to pitch-black and back over some interval.
9	7,0,7	7,0,7	Psycho Kombat	Dark Kombat, infinite Super Meter, fast uppercut recovery.
10	2,2,7	2,2,7	Explosive Kombat	Only works in Tag matches. When player dies, they explode.
11	7,1,7	3,1,3	Random Phrase 1	"Don't defend in a temple corrupted with shadow..."
12	4,4,8	8,4,4	Random Phrase 2	"The krypt walls hold secrets..."
13	1,2,2	2,2,1	Random Phrase 3	"What lurks at the bottom of the pit?"
14	0,0,9	9,0,0	Random Phrase 4	"?SUNOB YTSAOT"
15	5,5,0	0,5,5	Random Phrase 5	"Who hides in the forest?"
16	0,3,1	1,3,0	Random Phrase 6	"Motaro Transformation?"
17	2,8,2	2,8,2	Random Phrase 7	"She waits for you at the top of the tower..."
18	1,2,3	9,2,6	Random Phrase 8	"Thanks for karing!"

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#	P1	P2	Code Name	Description
19	1,1,0	0,0,0	Player 1 Half Health	Player 1 starts with 50% health.
20	0,0,0	1,1,0	Player 2 Half Health	Player 2 starts with 50% health.
21	0,4,4	4,4,0	Sans Power	Start on danger.
22	0,1,2	0,1,2	Health Recovery	Slowly regain health over time.
23	0,9,1	0,9,1	Hyper Fighting	Movement speed increase.
24	3,9,1	1,9,3	Double Dash	Dashes go 2x farther.
25	8,3,1	8,3,1	Jumping Disabled	Can't jump.
26	7,3,1	7,3,1	Specials Disabled	All specials and enhanced specials are disabled.
27	9,3,1	9,3,1	Kombos Disabled	Disables all 2 in 1's and all chain combos.
28	0,9,0	0,9,0	No Breakers	Disables the ability to perform combo breakers.
29	9,0,0	9,0,0	No Blood	Disables blood, fatalities, etc.
30	6,6,6	6,6,6	Zombie Kombat	Zombie effect on both players.
31	0,0,1	0,0,1	Disable Foreground Elements	Hides all foreground objects for selected background.
32	4,2,4	4,2,4	Vampire Kombat	Everything drains health. Eyes glow blue.
33	1,2,3	1,2,3	Super Recovery	Slowly regain Super Meter over time.

#	P1	P2	Code Name	Description
34	7,7,0	7,7,0	Invisible Kombat	Randomly toggle each player from visible to invisible and back.
35	2,3,4	2,3,4	Rainbow Kombat	Blood color randomly changes during course of fight.
36	2,2,2	5,5,5	Dream Kombat	Enables the full-screen "dream" effect from Nightwolf Tower chapter.
37	9,1,1	9,1,1	Armless Kombat	Players start with both arms dismembered.
38	8,0,8	8,0,8	Headless Kombat	Players start match with head dismembered.
39	2,4,2	2,4,2	X-Rays Disabled	X-Rays are disabled.
40	0,5,1	1,5,0	Enhanced Moves Disabled	Enhanced moves are disabled.
41	1,1,1	1,1,1	Tournament Mode	Disables Toasty Bonus; disables foreground objects.
42	2,2,0	0,0,0	Player 1 Quarter Health	Player 1 starts with 25% health.
43	0,0,0	2,2,0	Player 2 Quarter Health	Player 2 starts with 25% health.
44	1,0,1	1,0,1	Klassic Music	Turns on legacy music for the stage.

Xbox 360 Achievements and PlayStation 3 Trophy Chart

Achievement/Trophy Names	Description	Xbox Pts.	Playstation® 3 Points
Trophy 1: Halfway There!	Complete Story mode 50%	5	15
Trophy 2: Back In Time…	Complete Story mode 100%	20	30
Trophy 3: A For Effort	Complete Tutorial Mode	10	15
Trophy 4: Fatality!	Perform a Fatality!	5	15
Trophy 5: Block This!	Perform a 10-hit combo with any fighter	10	15
Trophy 6: The Grappler	Perform every fighter's forward and backward throw in a fighting mode	10	15
Trophy 7: Where's the Arcade?	Complete Arcade Ladder with any fighter	10	15
Trophy 8: Arcade Champion	Complete Arcade Ladder with all fighters	40	30
Trophy 9: Finish What You Start	Perform a fatality with all playable fighters	60	30
Trophy 10: The Competitor	Complete 200 versus matches (online or offline)	30	30
Trophy 11: Ladder Master	Complete Arcade Ladder on max difficulty without using a continue	20	15
Trophy 12: Don't Jump!	Win a ranked online match without jumping	10	15
Trophy 13: What Does This Button Do?	Complete Arcade Ladder without blocking (allowed to continue)	10	15
Trophy 14: Tough Guy	Win an online match	10	15
Trophy 15: Robots Rule!	Win Arcade Tag Ladder with robot Sektor and Cyrax	10	15
Trophy 16: Outstanding	Win 10 ranked online matches in a row	60	30

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Achievement/Trophy Names	Description	Xbox Pts.	Playstation® 3 Points
Trophy 17: Cyber Challenger	Complete 100 online matches	20	15
Trophy 18: Wavenet	Win 100 total online matches	80	30
Trophy 19: Humiliation	Get a flawless victory in an online match	10	15
Trophy 20: You Will Learn Respect	Earn 1,000 Respect Points via King of the Hill matches	10	15
Trophy 21: Undertaker	Unlock 50% of the Krypt	20	15
Trophy 22: The Krypt Keeper	Unlock 100% of the Krypt	20	30
Trophy 23: There Will Be Blood	Spill 10,000 pints of blood	40	30
Trophy 24: License to Kill	Complete the Fatality Tutorial mode	20	15
Trophy 25: Ultimate Respect	Earn 2,500 Respect Points via King of the Hill matches	20	15
Trophy 26: There Can Only Be One	Win 10 King of the Hill Matches in a row	20	30
Trophy 27: Throws Are for Champs!	Perform eight throws in an online ranked match	20	15
Trophy 28: Turtle	Win both rounds with timer running out in an online ranked match	20	30
Trophy 29: I'm Not Dead Yet!	Comeback with under 10% health in an online ranked match	20	30
Trophy 30: Cold Fusion	Unlock hidden fighter "Cyber Sub-Zero"	20	15
Trophy 31: e-x-Cellent!	Successfully land every playable fighter's X-Ray in a fighting mode	10	15
Trophy 32: Luck Be a Lady	Get all MK dragons in Test Your Luck	10	15
Trophy 33: You've Got Style!	Unlock all alternate costumes	20	30
Trophy 34: Best…Alternate…Ever	Unlock Mileena's third alternate costume	10	15
Trophy 35: My Kung Fu Is Strong	Gain mastery of one fighter	20	30
Trophy 36: My Kung Fu Is Stronger	Gain mastery of all fighters	60	90
Trophy 37: I "Might" Be the Strongest	Complete all Test Your Might minigame challenges	20	15
Trophy 38: Dim Mak!	Complete all Test Your Strike minigame challenges	20	15
Trophy 39: These Aren't My Glasses!	Complete all Test Your Sight minigame challenges	20	15
Trophy 40: Tower Apprentice	Complete 25 tower missions	10	15
Trophy 41: Tower Master	Complete all tower missions	20	30
Trophy 42: Tag, You're It!	Perform and land a tag combo	10	15
Trophy 43: Complet-ality!	Perform one of each type of "-ality"		10
Trophy 44: Finish Him!	Perform any fighter's hidden finishing move	10	15
Trophy 45: Ultimate Humiliation	Perform every fighter's hidden finishing move	20	30
Trophy 46: Quan-Tease	Unlock hidden fighter "Quan Chi"	20	15
Trophy 47: You Found Me!	Discover and fight Hidden Kombatant 1 in Arcade Ladder	10	15
Trophy 48: Hide and Seek	Discover and fight Hidden Kombatant 2 in Arcade Ladder	10	15
Trophy 49: Pit Master	Discover and fight Hidden Kombatant 3 in Arcade Ladder	10	15
Trophy 50: Brotherhood of Shadow	Discover and fight Hidden Kombatant 4 in Arcade Ladder	20	30
PS3 only Platinum Trophy			Unlock All Trophies

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Character Tier Chart

The chart below lists the expected matchup results between two expert level players. To read the chart, begin with a character from the left column. Each number denotes how many wins that character can expect to obtain in a VS battle matchup with two players of equal skill using all of the possible tools and strategies each character has to offer. Wins are read horizontally for each character, losses are read vertically. The total number of wins for each character is listed on the first column. Matchups that have heavy disadvantages are in red, and heavy advantage based matchups are in green.

Please note that not every player will have the same results, this list was compiled with advantages and disadvantages for each matchup setting. Just because your character shows a loss ration of 8-2 to another character, it does not mean that you will still lose to that character. Like other tier lists for fighting games, matchups are player dependent at times.

	Total Wins	Baraka	Cyber Sub-Zero	CyraX	Ermac	Jade	JaX	Johnny Cage	Kabal	Kano	Kitana	Kung lao	Liu Kang	Mileena	Nightwolf	Noob	Quan Chi	Raiden	Reptile	Scorpion	Sektor	Shang Tsung	Sheeva	Sindel	Smoke	Sonya	Stryker	Sub-Zero	Kratos
Baraka	112	X	6	3.5	3	5	4	3	4	4	3.5	3.5	3.5	4	3	5	6	3	5	4	5	2.5	5.5	4.5	3	4	4.5	4.5	5.5
Cyber Sub-Zero	101	4	X	4	2	4	4	3	4	4	3.5	3	3.5	4	2	4.5	5	3	4	4	4.5	2	5	4	3	4	4	4	5
CyraX	125.5	6.5	6	X	4	5.5	6	4	4.5	4.5	4.5	3	4.5	5	3	5	6	3.5	5	4.5	5	3	6	4	3.5	4.5	4.5	5	5
Ermac	154	7	8	6	X	6	6	5.5	5.5	5.5	6	4.5	5.5	5.5	5	6	7	4.5	5	5.5	6	4	7	6	5	5	5.5	5.5	6
Jade	130.5	5	6	4.5	4	X	4.5	4	5	5	4.5	4	4.5	4.5	4	6	6	4	5	5	5	4	6.5	5	4	4.5	4.5	5.5	6
JaX	131	6	6	4	4	5.5	X	4.5	4	4.5	4.5	4	5	5	4	6	6	4	4.5	5	5.5	3	6	4.5	4.5	5	5	5	6
Johnny Cage	155	7	7	6	4.5	6	5.5	X	5	5.5	5.5	5	5.5	6	5	6.5	6	5	5.5	5.5	6	4.5	7	6	5	5.5	6	5	8
Kabal	145	6	6	5.5	4.5	5	6	5	X	5.5	5	4	5	5.5	4	6	6	4.5	5	6	6	4.5	6.5	5.5	5	5.5	5.5	5	7
Kano	140.5	6	6	5.5	4.5	5	5.5	4.5	4.5	X	5	4	5	5	4.5	6	7	5	5.5	5	6	5	6	5	4.5	5.5	4.5	4.5	6
Kitana	139	6.5	6.5	5.5	4	5.5	5.5	4.5	5	5	X	4.5	5.5	4.5	4	6	6	4	5	5	6	4	6	5	4	5.5	5	5	6
Kung lao	159	6.5	7	7	5.5	6	6	5	6	6	5.5	X	6	6	5	6	7	5	5.5	5.5	6	4.5	7	5.5	5.5	6	5.5	5.5	7
Liu Kang	142	6.5	6.5	5.5	4.5	5.5	5	4.5	5	5	4.5	4	X	5.5	4	6	7	4.5	4.5	5	6	4.5	7	4.5	5	5	6	5	6
Mileena	136.5	6	6	5	4.5	5.5	5	4	4.5	5	5.5	4	4.5	X	4	5	6	4.5	5	6	5.5	4	6	5	5	5	5.5	4.5	6
Nightwolf	158.5	7	8	7	5	6	6	5	6	5.5	6	5	6	6	X	4.5	7	5	5.5	5.5	6	4.5	6	6	6	5.5	5.5	6	7
Noob	124.5	5	5.5	5	4	4	4	3.5	4	4	4	4	4	5	5.5	X	6	4	4.5	5	4.5	4.5	5	4	4.5	5.5	5	5.5	5
Quan Chi	103.5	4	5	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	4	X	3	4	4	4.5	3	5	4	3	4	4	4	5
Raiden	161	7	7	6.5	5.5	6	6	5	5.5	5	6	5	5.5	5.5	5	6	7	X	6	6	6	6	6.5	6	6	6	6	6	7
Reptile	136	5	6	5	5	5	5.5	4.5	5	4.5	5	4.5	5.5	5	4.5	5.5	6	4	X	5	5.5	4	6	5	4	5	4.5	5.5	6
Scorpion	135.5	6	6	5.5	4.5	5	5	4.5	4	5	5	4.5	5	4	4.5	5	6	4	5	X	6	4	6	5	4.5	5	5.5	5	6
Sektor	123	5	5.5	5	4	5	4.5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4.5	4	5.5	5.5	4	4.5	4	X	4	6	4.5	4	4.5	4.5	5	5.5
Shang Tsung	165	7.5	8	7	6	6	7	5.5	5.5	5	6	5.5	5.5	6	5.5	5.5	7	4	6	6	6	X	7	6	5.5	6	6	7	7
Sheeva	105	4.5	5	4	3	3.5	4	3	3.5	4	4	3	3	4	4	5	5	3.5	4	4	4	3	X	4	3	4	4	4	5
Sindel	136	5.5	6	6	4	5	5.5	4	4.5	5	5	4.5	5.5	5	4	6	6	4	5	5	5.5	4	6	X	4	5	4.5	5.5	6
Smoke	153	7	7	6.5	5	6	5.5	5	5	5.5	6	4.5	5	5	4	5.5	7	4	6	5.5	6	4.5	7	6	X	6	6	5.5	7
Sonya	134	6	6	5.5	5	5.5	5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4	5	5	4.5	4.5	6	4	5	5	5.5	4	6	5	4	X	5	4.5	6
Stryker	133.5	4.5	6	5.5	4.5	5.5	5	4	4.5	5.5	5	4.5	4	4.5	4.5	5	6	4	5.5	4.5	5.5	4	6	5.5	4	5	X	5	6
Sub-Zero	133.5	5.5	6	5	4.5	4.5	5	5	5	5.5	5	4.5	5	5.5	4	4.5	6	4	4.5	5	5	3	6	4.5	4.5	5.5	5	X	6
Kratos (PS3)	107	4.5	5	5	4	4	4	2	3	4	4	3	4	4	3	5	5	3	4	4	4.5	3	5	4	4	4	4	4	X

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FOREWORD

The universe of *Mortal Kombat* is very unique. Within it, you can find ninjas, cyborgs, policemen, sorcerers, movie stars, soldiers, vampires, mutants, dragons, shamans and even the god of lightning himself. We are able to mix high science fiction with fantastical magic battles. We can have a special-ops lieutenant fight a 2,000-year-old half dragon.

With such a wide spectrum of available locales and characters, the art of *Mortal Kombat* has always had a very distinctive essence.

We are fortunate to have one of the most creative and talented teams in the industry. I am amazed at what our artists create day in and day out, and to be able to see what they have produced on a daily basis is a joy unlike no other.

With the Kollector's Edition of the strategy guide, we were offered the opportunity to share with the fans some great artwork that may have never seen the light of day before, as well as some insight into some of the creative minds behind the dragon.

I really hope all you fans enjoy looking at the art as much as I do and as much as our great team enjoys creating it to share with you all. If it wasn't for the millions of fans out in EarthRealm, none of this would be possible.

Hector Sanchez
Producer
NetherRealm Studios

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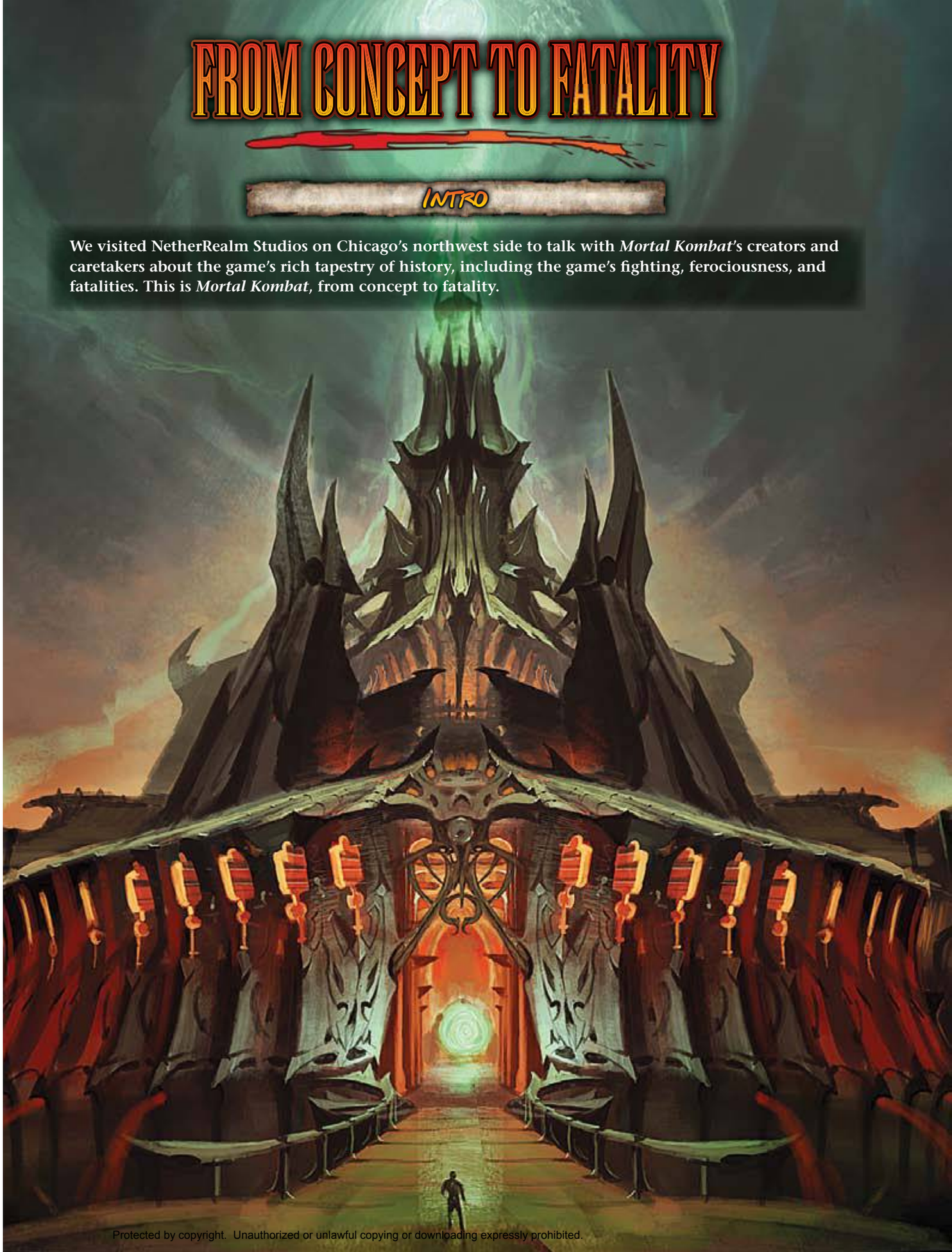
FROM CONCEPT TO FATALITY

INTRO

We visited NetherRealm Studios on Chicago's northwest side to talk with *Mortal Kombat*'s creators and caretakers about the game's rich tapestry of history, including the game's fighting, ferociousness, and fatalities. This is *Mortal Kombat*, from concept to fatality.



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Ed Boon, Creator of Mortal Kombat

Q: Can you speak to the blessings and curses of working on a game like ***MK*** in the 1990s vs. now?

A: There aren't any "curses" to working on *MK*, but there were certainly different challenges back in the '90s as well as now. One of the big challenges of working on the *MK* games in the '90s was time. We did many of those games under a very tight schedule. We always had the clock ticking because someone committed to delivering the game by a certain date and that inevitably limited what we could put in the game. Today the challenge is the volume of work it takes to make the game. With over 100 people working on the game for 2+ years, it's staggering how much effort is needed to make a game to compete in today's market.

Q: Do you maximize gore at all times or pull back at some point?

A: We don't maximize it all the time. We hold back during the normal fighting. If we maxed out all the time, then it wouldn't be special when the crazy events happened.

Q: Most important things for you to get across to this new generation of players being introduced to ***MK***?

A: For people who've never played *Mortal Kombat* before, we want them to be able to pick up the game and have fun right off the bat. After they play the game for a while, we hope they will begin to discover some of the layers we put into the fighting engine as well as the many secrets we've buried into the game. On top of all that, we want people to get into the story and characters that we're wrapping this game with. There are so many interesting characters that we hope everyone will relate to at least a few of them.

Q: What do you like best about games today? What do you like least?

A: I like the variety of experiences that are available in games today. Especially now with the mobile market, it seems like games with that classic arcade feel have a new platform to excel again on. What I like the least is not having enough time to play all the great games that are being released all the time. There are so many titles that I have to end up just watching people play because I could never find the time to enjoy them myself. There are so many titles it's like sensory overload!

Q: Who is your favorite ***MK*** character and why?

A: Scorpion is my favorite character because he was the first character that we gave a "special move" to. When we first got his spear working, people in the company were so excited and that's really how the momentum started with *Mortal Kombat*. There was no such thing as fatalities, but people "felt good" when they speared someone and yanked them in for a free hit. That's why Scorpion is my favorite character.

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Hunter Schulz, Senior Artist (Concept), and Mike Tassie, Artist (Concept)

Q: So tell us about Scorpion.

Hunter: I got to design Scorpion, which, you know...I remember him when I was a little guy, so you always thought he was so cool. It was a really fun process to be able to explore the different approaches to what he might look like. And I think in the end, we ended up with something that's pretty cool, and for me, that's kind of a personal highlight. He's such an iconic character.

Q: How did you go about exploring him?

Hunter: You know, in the beginning with concept stuff, there's always going to be a series of iterations. I think with him because he was so important...it was even more heavy on the iterations. I mean, we could only go so far. It wasn't about totally revisualizing or revamping his character, but it was staying within a certain realm of design language. Within that realm, we were able to like explore kind of each end...of those limitations that we have with him.

So it seemed narrow at first, but it seemed like there was a lot of stuff that you could kind of get away with and that fans and people would still get what they expected. So I think, in the end, we got that kind of more "exoskeletony" Scorpion-themed armor that seemed appropriate, but still close enough where people would recognize him. So doing all those iterations was a pretty fun process.

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Mike: I guess a highlight for me would be a lot of the environment concepts. I did a good amount of them, a good chunk of them, and that was actually a lot of fun. Mainly because just being able to like work with some of the 3-D environment guys and...with the art director and everything and creating new ideas and trying to revamp the old-school levels and just making them new and fresh and getting...a fresh design look to them.

I guess a couple of the favorite ones of mine that I liked were the Shao Kahn Coliseum, and then the bell tower because...I had the most fun on them just because the coliseum, I just kept thinking of this whole like gladiator type of arena where it's just massive with tons of people roaring and cheering. And at times, like intimidating to fight there. But I really enjoyed that one, and I like the bell tower one because it was...a lot simpler, and you were like the top of the bell tower, which is something like wood beams and some ropes and stuff.

But I really wanted to make it seem...a lot more elaborate and massive than it really was. So I wanted to add tons of these maps looking like old iron-cast or copper-cast bells, like wood and brick combined. Just an old kind of historical play...in a sense. But yeah, I'd say that was probably my... highlight.

Q: So in terms of doing backgrounds, you probably had more flexibility than you did with characters.

Hunter: Probably maybe a little bit because characters sometimes—

[Hunter addresses Mike]

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Very dull. Some characters, especially with old costumes, you were able to kind of go farther off the beaten path. But with a lot of the environments, they were based off of the *MK2* or *MK3* environment.

Mike: So I got a little bit more...yeah, a little bit more elbow room here and there, but—

Q: It was so low-res back then. You guys are like a square pixel column.

Mike: Exactly. But, yeah, it was definitely a challenge, too, to make it recognizable to the old game. Like, "Oh, I know what this is supposed to be or what this is." That was definitely a big challenge, trying to find that challenge between making something completely new or keeping what the old designs do.

Q: Well, can both of you guys speak to that? I mean, what was the blessing and the curse of working with such an iconic idea?

Hunter: The blessing...well, you know, since it is so iconic, you're excited no matter what. And even with certain limitations, it's not going to ruin your day. During the day, you're doing something really cool....Another blessing with that is with certain limitations is that you kind of know what they'll want to see and what to expect, and it kind of—I wouldn't say it's a narrow-mindedness, but more of—there's more direction involved.

So sometimes, you can approach a concept and be like, you know, maybe his arms have a tree branch, or maybe...you know, we work in fantasy games. It can really be anything. If they come [at you with], "Design a mage." Is it a dwarf? Is it [an] elf? So...you can kind of drive yourself crazy because you can never get out all these ideas that will be...all the potentials. So in that sense, it's a little bit more comforting to know that there's only so much really you can do. And you know, the curse is you don't get to draw people with tree branch arms and elves, or doing something much more fantastical sometimes is a lot of fun.

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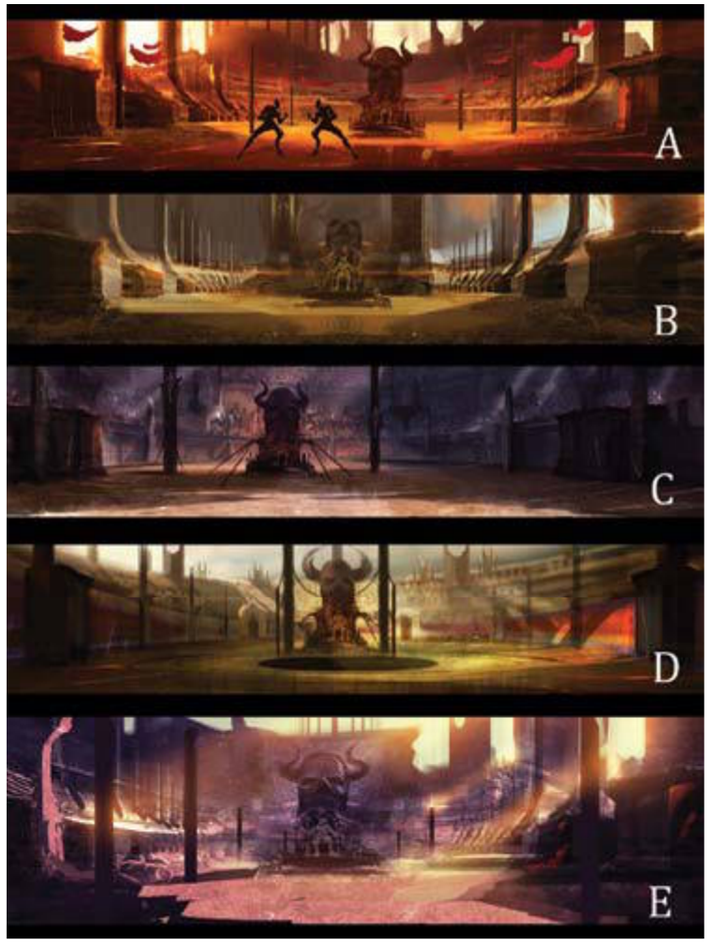


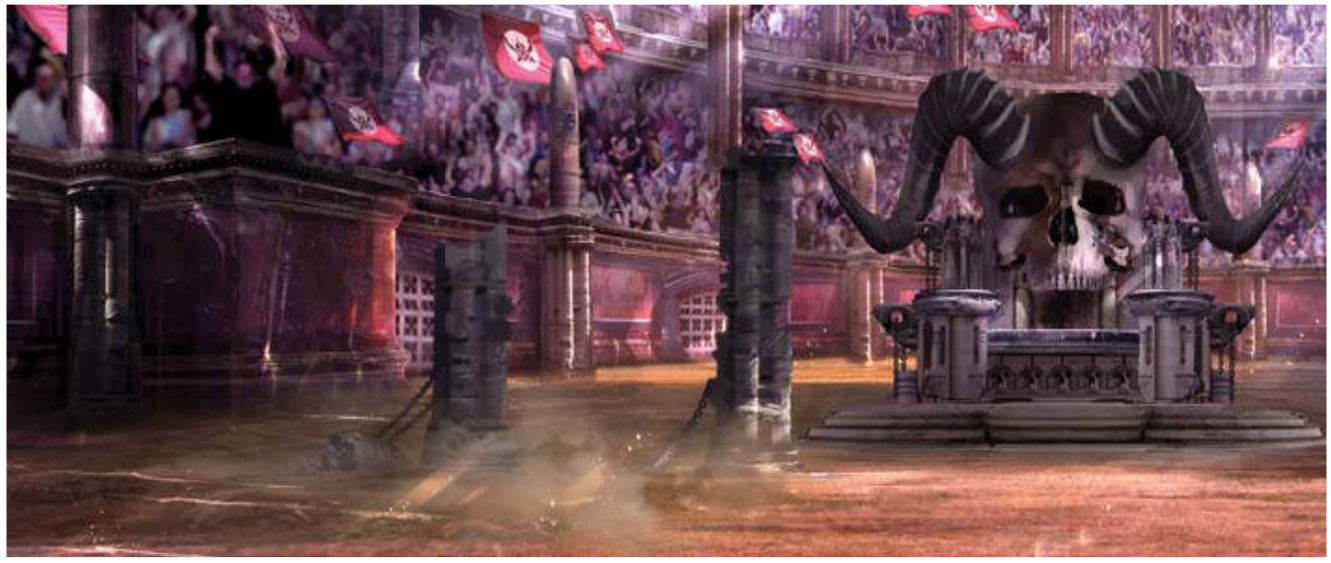
Mike: And I really agree. Again, the blessing is like working on something [so] iconic and so well known, and just being able to work with a great team and just seeing how many people are passionate about what they do. A lot of artists and designers— Again, the curse would probably just be trying to make it look like the original without going too far. Because sometimes we've gone like way far, and they're like, "Oh, that's really awesome, but it's not necessarily what it should be or how it should look."

And one thing I've found is that we can do concepts all day long and pump out thousands of ideas, but then it takes— Like the art director comes and says, "Okay, this is the cutoff. These look good. Now move on to the next point and the next step." It's definitely a learning process.

Hunter: Yeah, concept artists will always want to do more. And no matter what game—

Q: In their DNA.

Hunter: Yeah. I worked on a Batman game where I was designing guys, thugs, that were just in jeans. So...there is a hell of a lot more freedom than there would be in most games, and it's realistic, in a sense, but it's still a



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fantastical world. So you can still make your mark, whether it's through the design language, or like the way you compose an environment or something. That type of freedom is definitely there.

Q: What have you learned about Mortal Kombat while on the job? Learned a lot?

Hunter: Learned a lot. We did the ending, so the endings, you know, not only are you approaching the illustrations for the current ending of this game, but you have to go into the history of it and the backstory. And so we spent a lot of time with the story guy that's been here since like *MK2*. Is it something like that?

Mike: Yeah.

Hunter: I mean, he's just right across from us. So we'll walk over and be like, "Sindel, you know, what's her deal? She's from Adenia, and what." Just these details, facts, about the lore that probably few people know.

Mike: Yeah, helps them push the design more if we know like a background or history to it. It kind of just reemphasizes the history or the story that we put into the design rather than just making something look like a pretty picture. It's more thought out. Like why does this person look like this? Why are they standing that way, or why is the environment built this way?

Q: That's awesome. That would be my next question—what might fans not know? That seems like that might be one. It's like, you guys have across the hall from you one of the authors and creators of the IP. It's kind of crazy. So you can run any hypothetical you want past them and get insight that helps shape and influence your art.

Hunter: And I think we work closely because...it's important. Obviously, the game is...visual, in a sense, and then you have the history and the writing. And of course, the writer wants it to be realized. So working with John Vogel, it's like it's completely necessary. But having that relationship is kind of like you feed off each other. He actually started off as an artist here.

Q: Which is huge advantage for you guys that he can think visually.

Hunter: Right. You know, the whole part of the production should be very interlocked. Like we don't really deal much with programmers. But on the art side, with the story and animation and stuff like that, we're a lot more involved. Especially now that we're in the studio with everybody sitting.

Q: Any notable stories from development beyond the typical 90-hour, no weekends, working all the way through, not leaving the building for four days straight or whatever?

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Mike: Our aisle is probably the loudest art aisle here. We're pretty loud. That probably just comes with being a concept artist.

Hunter: It's fun. It's art. You have to be passionate, and you have to have a good time with it, so I think you can't always muzzle the artist, and the programmers are probably a lot more quiet than us.

Mike: Yeah, they're probably a lot more quiet than us.

Hunter: Yeah, this is actually done by our team in one day, and the Goro head from the movie was just sitting on the front desk, and everybody was just staring at it, and guys were just like touching at it, and it's like—

Mike: Very scaly.

Hunter: Yeah, scaly.

Mike: From the original movie.

Hunter: From the original movie, it's all mushy and stuff. That's the cool thing about working here is you get to see all these kind of like artifacts from the original games. Those were filmed video. So there's a Quan Chi shoulder pads just sitting right next to me. And they're...sitting on a desk. Then other stuff is like hung up on the wall, like the more museum approach. But it's funny to see the actual material that they used. It was all makeshift and much more simple than you would expect.

Q: How about your inspiration for your art?

Hunter: Mike could go on forever.

Mike: I could go on forever. There's a lot of inspiration. Just as an artist in general, all the old-school master painters and artists and seeing how they worked and just reading through books and seeing images.

Q: Any of them that you can think of as they apply to the game?

Mike: To the game in general?

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Q: Is there a certain artist that would have more influence?

Mike: Yeah. Ian McCabe. That guy is just phenomenal. I've been following his artwork for the entire time I've been an artist.

Q: Ian McCabe?

Mike: Ian McCabe. Yeah. He's just— Like, I have some of the DVDs, too, and just what he talks about like with a story of an idea or like...it seems like he's very passionate about what he's doing, and it's very inspirational to see it. And you can see it in his artwork. Every sketch...every little mark tells a story about the character or the environment or the storyboards or whatever he's trying to portray. And it's very fantastical, very kind of fancy. Other things are more like earth grounded.

It's helped me quite a bit, looking at them and hearing what he has to say inspired me to the way I approach certain concepts and what's the story behind it, what's the history behind the character or what are you trying to say or portray or tell the audience, and how do you sequentially story tell?

Hunter: He's not a very...He's not so much a technical guy. He's all about approach and getting in deep [with] the history of the subject.

Q: Would you guys have a sequence, or can you think of a sequence of art that you could talk about the way that you tried to emulate some of what he did with some of what you created? In terms of, "Here is what we did here, attention to detail, and I tried to add these extra elements"?

Hunter: You could say the ending of the nice little— What was it? Jade's ending...He was totally influenced in that.

Mike: Oh, yeah. Jade's ending. That one was really cool. [It] was kind of open-ended a little bit....The way it is, it's like she enters into this dreamlike state. So a dreamlike state, I mean, that could be anything. I mean literally anything. I mean your imagination is the limit. So it's kind of cool because I got to like draw her as she's slipping into this dream state and then creating this whole world that's just within her mind or this other world that she enters through her soul or something, and it was all these like rock structures and crystals and all these parts that are shifting and moving while she's searching the environment.

Then she sees this lone figure that's like glimmering and shining and everything. And that was a lot of fun because we created these—Danish, he created this—he animated a lot of these, and it looked awesome. It came out great. We created these like crystals and everything that would move apart, and then the camera would zoom in and show this shimmering woman, and with very little description it was an opportunity to jump in and design something brand-new because what she was supposed to look like wasn't defined yet. So I tried to create this woman where her skin would kind of look like crystal but also be shimmering. I tried to give her more of...a regal feel...and give her some...of the design influences, some Egyptian designs with the clothing is very minimal, with a hooded cloak, and she's pulling back her cloak to look at Jade and tell her she's been watching from this other world for a long period of time. And then she possesses Jade's body, and Jade wakes up, and her eyes are like glowing blue.

So it was pretty cool. And just back with the Ian McCabe thing and just when I was doing that, I was thinking about what you talked about, how to approach a story, and there's all these arcs within the stories. Like there's [the] beginning, the climax, and the end and everything. I was trying to push that in with the design and the illustrations that I was doing. Overall, it was a pretty cool experience.

Q: Cool. Last question for both of you. Who is your favorite Mortal Kombat character and why?

Hunter: I think I'm too biased in this and too close to him, but Scorpion. I mean, I've always liked him. I'm more drawn to darker material, and there's something about this specter, and you know, his whole kind of persona is just really interesting and really dark. And he has a powerful kind of presence.

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And the fact, you know, I got to kind of explore his design and got to do the final design. So of course I feel a connection with him, but even beyond that, I think he's probably one of my favorites.

Q: Would you say there's something that's your element in this version of him since you created him?

Hunter: Yeah...I'm glad they went with the approach, and I didn't think at first they were going to. And originally, I definitely went more overboard. At one point, he was very heavily armored; like the final design, he does have the armor—the golden armor that has the Scorpion motif—and it's supposed to mimic the exoskeleton of a scorpion. One of the original designs—I mean, he was plated with like exoskeleton, like the back of a scorpion—it made him look too heavy, and in the end, it didn't make it through.

But to me, I'm really happy that that motif made it through. Like his shoulder pads made it through. If you look closely, there's like the pinchers of a scorpion, and the end is the tail that curls up. I don't know if it's obvious enough for people to realize that. And then his swords, the ends of them, are scorpion stingers. And then his face, there's an impression of like scorpion legs. Almost like the scorpion is attached to his mouth. So I'm really happy that they went with more of an ornate approach, whereas in the past, he's been more played down in simple garb and so I think it's a little more elaborate.

And then the underarmor—not actually Under Armor but the leather-based material that he has underneath his armor and his cloth and stuff—I got to design that a little bit more fully, too, and that's a little bit more detailed and segmented to mimic the exoskeleton, and also to give the impression that there is a flexibility, and since there's segments, it's still able to bend where it needs to be. These kind of details are complexities we weren't able to get through in a lot of the other characters, and sometimes because you want something to read. You want it to be bold, but I'm happy that it's out. You know, he got more of the all-over approach.

Like every part of his costume, his design, we called out, which I think is really cool. And it creates more depth to the character because you know, there is attention to those details like in his knee pads and his gauntlets and stuff. So I'm glad they...gave me the time to kind of fully realize it.

Q: What about you, Mike?

Mike: I'm kind of split decision. Well, as of recently. Growing up, it's always been kind of Sub-Zero, just because his powers and the way he looked and everything. I always thought that was really cool. And now, it's still Sub-Zero, but after playing our current game, I'm really liking the Noob Saibot character.... He's very dark-looking, but he's got this shadow type of feel to him, and...it almost seems like organic oil or something like that that's like moving whenever he does certain powers and moves and other things. I guess those two characters I really like.

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Carlos Pesina, Art Lead (Animation)

Q: Tell us something Mortal Kombat fans don't know about you and your job.

A: Well, I've been with Mortal Kombat for so long, I think they know every little nook and cranny.

Q: How long have you been—

A: Since Day 1. I was actually Raiden. Little tidbits. I don't know.

Q: You were Raiden, meaning you were the model? Or you were the—

A: I was the actual character for the 2-D game, and then I came in to do some martial arts, and I've been with the company ever since.

Q: Awesome.

A: Yeah. Little tidbit like any weird thing, or—

Q: That one right there is pretty cool. We have to remember that this is a whole new generation.

A: That's true. I keep thinking that growing up with this and being involved with it for so long that fans usually tend to stick with Mortal Kombat, and they know the history and the people who actually work behind the scenes. So, yeah, in the original one, I was Raiden. I was asked by Ed to come in and do some martial arts work. Back then, it was 2-D, and we had to do the green screen, so I had to put on the Raiden costume, throw kicks, punches, and do all the special moves. What's funny is transitioning to motion capture, it's sort of similar, but it's kind of different.

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Q: In what way?

A: Well, obviously, I don't have to put the costume on anymore. You know, we can just apply the data to the character, but we still do the— You know how Raiden does a Superman move? Like in the 2-D world, I just sat on a chair. Just like stiff as a board all the way across the chair. And it's sort of the same thing when we're in the motion studio.

Q: Very cool. What have you learned about Mortal Kombat while on the job?

A: What have I learned? As in the job or the actual content of the game? I hate to be existential.

Q: It could be—again, [when] your perspective is so different. You've been a part of it for so long. What are the blessings and curses of working on a game like Mortal Kombat in the 1990s versus now?

A: Well, we've done a lot. Like, you know, when you start a game, there's a slow progression. And then toward the end, you're really, like, crunching. But to me, there's a balance there where it's like, "Hey, I'm enjoying myself. We're getting our ideas out," and then, "Oh my God, we have to get this content done." But I also enjoy that because it's the—

Q: The yin and the yang.

A: Exactly. Yin [and] yang, there's a balance of— You know, I'll give you an example. This must have been about three weeks before probably the Christmas break. We're all here late. We need to make an adjustment for something, and more or less, I have to get in the suit. And it's like 9:00 at night. Now we've been working all day for 15-hour days. Some people work 20 hours. But it's funny because it's like, "Oh my God." We have to do this move that has to get in the game in order to fix whatever we see the problem is.

And it's funny because it's like you're tired, but I was ready to go in there, capture it, and then work on it. But it's little things like that that sometimes you can't get talent to come in at 9:00 at night, and if they come in the next day, it's a little bit too late. I mean, it could have waited, but we needed a quick fix for certain things. And I think I like— It's given me the insight that at times, I'm really tired and exhausted, but loving the content and the game so much and working with that. It's been nothing but a pleasure working with him.

And when he (Ed Boon) says, "Hey, man, I want you to give 150 percent," and you're like, "Yeah, I'm gonna do it," because you just love doing what you're doing. The job or the career.

Q: Having a good mentor and boss like that keeps you inspired and stuff.

A: Exactly, yeah. It's one of the things— There were behind-the-scenes people because everyone was always...everyone relates to a boss as "Oh,

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he's just cracking the whip or whatever," but he's really not like that. He's awesome to work with.

Q: You're lucky.

A: That's the thing. It's opportunity, yeah, to work with someone talented like him.

Q: Any notable...well, you kind of just got into that. I was going to say notable stories from development, and you just gave me a great one with putting the suit on.

A: Yeah, there's tons like that.

Q: What is your inspiration for your work and how it applies to the game? What inspires you?

A: Well, coming from a martial arts background, that helps like 100 percent. You know? And being in martial arts for so long and being able to accept being open to things, you know, a positive structure of things, I think that helps a lot. And then also being familiar with different types of content, like fantasy, art. That helps. Like if you have the ability to translate something because people are visual people. If you have the ability to draw something out, that concept, more or less, you can see it to fruition...by applying to whatever.

So it's more like a design. If you're able to visualize it, then you can see its outcome at the end, more or less.

Q: What about those inspirations that the martial arts and the stuff that motivates you and how it's applied to the game? Can you give some examples of, say, the martial arts? The obvious one would be like that's not a true move or the move would be more like this?

A: Yeah, to an extent—like design. Design will say, "Hey, we want a kick," and they'll tell me to kick. But they'll want something different about it because, obviously, it's fantasy. So it's good having somebody who is able to direct talent, like when we're at the motion shoots, or when I'm actually processing the data. It's good to have somebody in between the talents and design to kind of translate what they would want to see executed, more or less. Obviously, there's tweaks at the end.

It's good also having somebody who understands who actually does the actual work and is like, "Oh, I can tweak that out for you. That's not really what you wanted? We'll just throw that on top of it."

Q: Can you discuss the art style and presentation of this title, and what you would consider your contributions to it?

A: Contribute...well, being the lead in the animation department means taking that vision and design and trying to translate it over to every character—making sure that every character has their own unique characteristics that are different so that people wouldn't see it and say, "Oh, they're just using Nightwolf's front kick for somebody else's front kick," and making sure that looked distinctive for that character. That, and also making sure that we had memorable fatalities. Taking a fatality and making sure we got the vision that Ed had and making sure we went all the way to the extreme with it so that way people would see it and be more likely to cringe, or enjoy, pulling one off.

Q: That was actually one of the questions I had for him. Do you maximize the gore at all times, or do you pull back at some point?

A: Yeah, at some point, you have to pull back because you don't want to be disgusting or crossing that line, more or less. There's a dark humor component to all of this.

Q: Make it so over the top that it's obviously humor, but you don't want to get too disgusting?

A: Right. The spine rip. You can take that example. Taking the spine out. Obviously, he just holds it up as a trophy. But we can go even further with that, and you can do disgusting stuff with it, but there's a limit because you want to be tasteful, more or less.

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Q: So be as gory as possible...well, not be as gory as possible. It would just be interesting, the evolution of technology has allowed the pixels to get so small that you could completely go over the top. So I'm just wondering how you get to the line and how do you determine where the line is without going over it? Is it a common sensibilities thing?

A: Yeah, to an extent, it is. Well, first of all, I think when Ed comes up, when he has that vision of, "Hey, I want this fatality," when we go in to actually do it in the motion studio, sometimes we're in there, and we have to— When you actually see it visually, two guys trying to perform a fatality, you say, "Hey, you know what? We gotta cut back a little because the idea is there, but it's a little bit crossing the line a little bit too much," and then you have to be conservative [because] (1) you don't want to be silly and (2) like you said, you don't want to cross that line and disgust people, more or less. There is a limit, which we all have.

I think our intent is not to be disgusting, but to be more or less fun.

Q: You want funny in your fatality?

A: Exactly. There it is.

Q: Who is your favorite character and why?

A: Favorite character.

Q: Raiden?

A: No, that would be the most common. Everybody always says that. They're like, "Oh, he's so great," which back in the beginning I did, obviously, because of pride.

Q: He's like your boy or whatever.

A: Exactly. It was me. And, yeah, exactly. Got the glowing eyes and the lightning and disappearing and reappearing....I started off with Scorpion. That's Ed's favorite, to an extent. And he's really good, Scorpion, with his moves. But then as you start playing the game and opening yourself up toward the rest of the roster, the 20-some-odd characters, you start appreciating every little thing that each one of them does because it's been presented in such a well package that it's actually made me like every character, more or less. And I know I have favorites more than others, but I can't really pick. Like my first example is Scorpion. Then if you go over to Noob and you see his move set and you see the Shadow Form, you're like, "Oh, that's my new favorite." And then all of a sudden, I start playing Quan Chi and seeing his moves and everything we've done for him. And it's like, "Oh, you know what? No, he's my new favorite."

But I think the game allows people to like the one character that they really love, and then all of a sudden be able to branch off into other characters

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and finding out exactly how good they are with their move sets and how their costume looks. I could be honest. I can't really pick one. It's tough.

Q: It's really tough. It sounds to me like that's the mark of a great game, that you guys achieved your goal. I'm sure you wanted to create that with each character, make each character worthy to play. And it sounds like you've done that.

A: It seems like it. It makes each character distinctive. Before, I was like, "Oh, I'm just going to play Scorpion from now on." This is literally like a month ago. And it's funny because you're like, "Okay, now I'm going to play Sub-Zero. Wow, he's really good," and then you just start. It's a good thing.

Q: What are the most important things for you to get across to this new generation of players being introduced to Mortal Kombat?

A: That's a good one. I think from the beginning, the inception of Mortal Kombat, there's always been this underlying good versus evil. And I think along the way, all the way to the end, which is not the end, but this last one, I think it's going to introduce like, "Hey, the battle of good versus evil." I know there's a couple gray characters, but it seems like we try to distinguish what the line is of like, "Hey, these aren't the good guys. These are the bad guys."

And at times, I think a lot of games get lost in that whole gray area because that's been the...more like the mantra of entertainment since the '90s of like the, you know, you don't know if he's good or bad. I think that's why I've liked Mortal Kombat all along because there was always a distinct, "Hey, Scorpion versus Sub-Zero. Good versus evil." You know? You always knew which one was which, and there are driving forces behind it. And I think it's just introduced us to the new generation of the entire story line. And like you said before, this was my assumption because I've been working on it for so long.

I keep thinking the same people are following us, but you're absolutely correct. There's new people, and they need to be retold the story of 1, 2, 3. And me being a parent, I've played all the games. And now that my son is old enough, I'm able to reintroduce him to this as opposed to going back and playing the 2-D sprites. But you know how kids are now.

Q: How old is your son?

A: He's nine. But I limit [his exposure]. He can't do the fatalities [and]...you know, no blood, and this is how it is right now. But he's able to play that and go, "Wow." Because he's kind of interested. The story is involved in it. Because it's the three games wrapped together, more or less, as a retelling. Whereas if he plays the 2-D version, it's more of an arcade game. It's something we grew up with, which was awesome to us at the time, but looks old to him.

Q: Yes, looking back now at old games makes me wonder how the heck they held our attention for so long.

A: It's like watching an old Disney movie and then a Pixar—even though they're the same, but you're still like, "How did I watch that?"

Q: Right, you can't believe you were so mesmerized back then.

A: Yeah. It's like, "Okay." And going into science-fiction movies, it's like watching *Forbidden Planet* to *Star Wars* to *Lord of the Rings* into *Avatar*.

Q: Cool. Thank you.

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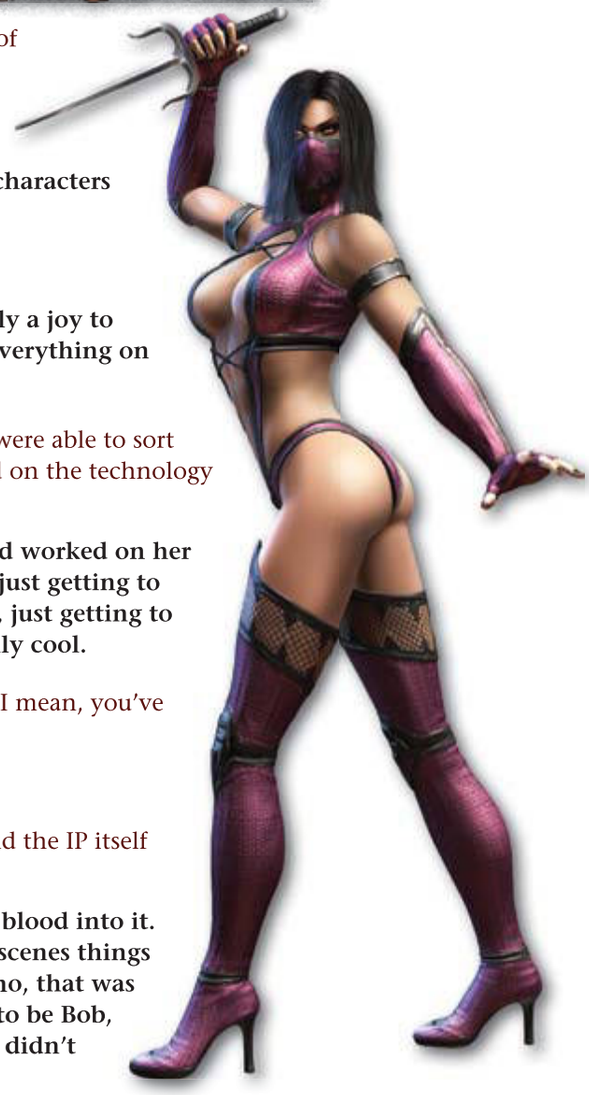
Cy Mandua, Art Lead (Characters)



Q: What's been the highlight, or what have been some highlights, of working on this game?

A: I would say one of the definite highlights was [the] last game. I actually got to do the concept and modeling and make everything for Sonya Blade, who was one of my favorite characters back from the very first game.

Q: Last game meaning...

A: I'm sorry. *Mortal Kombat versus DC*. So, yeah, it was just really a joy to take it from start to finish, the damage, the rigging, the cloth, everything on her.

Q: So that was one of your favorite original characters, and so you were able to sort of inject your own interpretation and take it to the next level based on the technology and tools available today?

A: Yeah, and actually get the concept approved by guys who had worked on her before. It's like, "Oh, hey, this is a really cool design."...I mean, just getting to work on her, period, and characters like Scorpion and Sub-Zero, just getting to work on it was awesome, but actually taking it that far was really cool.

Q: What have you learned about Mortal Kombat while on the job? I mean, you've been immersed and familiar with the IP for a long time now.

A: Yeah, I've played it since I was a kid.

Q: So you've really kind of helped to evolve the whole story line and the IP itself and everything.

A: I feel like hopefully I have at least injected a little bit of new blood into it. What have I learned? I mean, there's so many little behind-the-scenes things that you really learn when you get here, like Taven. Of course, no, that was in one of the behind-the-scenes things earlier. That Taven used to be Bob, and his brother used to be Doug. But you know, stuff like that I didn't actually know when I first got here.

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Q: Can you contribute something, then, to the lore from this game?

A: My only contribution would be I had early on suggested we needed a new character or needed to start introducing some new characters, and we're especially light on the female side, I feel. So I had suggested, "Hey, what about that red female ninja that people had kind of thought they saw from back in the Ermac days?" They thought there was a red female version as well. So I'm like, "Why don't we try making her?" She's now in the coliseum chained up [and people go], "What's she doing there? Is she new? Is she going to be playable? Is she going to be DOC? Is she going to be a secret character?"

That's probably something I've interjected on this project.

Q: Do you have any crazy horror stories or not-so-crazy horror stories? Funny stories, 90 hours straight, longer that—

A: Well...I'd say the last month or so of the project, just trying to get all the cloth and then the damage, and then the cloth for the damage because it...was really kind of...a work in progress up until almost December. So there was...a lot of reworking iteration on some of the initial cloth, and then just getting all the cloth—there's 60-some-odd costumes in the game.

Q: So you're talking specifically about actual cloth of the different uniforms, and how it showed—how it would move.

A: Oh, yeah. Then the frame is the damaged state of the cloth. But then a lot of times, like a strap will pop off and you have to get cloth to that so it moves around after it's broken. So there's just all these little things, and then there's bone limitations. So you're trying to get as much movement as you can in the cloth pieces and make it look good and not inner penetrate, but you've got these bone limitations. So, yeah, it was like 14-hour day after 14-hour day after 14-hour day, just cramming sort of all these characters, trying to get the cloth in, and luckily, we made it right underneath the wire, but that was pretty tough.

Q: What are inspirations for your art, and how do you apply it to the game?

A: Honestly, just...well, a lot of looking back at previous Mortal Kombats and just trying to take this little tiny picture of a guy and elaborate it and make it into a more realistic-looking human with more details on them. I was a big comic book fan back in the day, so a lot of—

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Q: Who in particular?

A: The big ones. You know, Batman, Spider-Man, not just cross genres.

Q: Artists in particular?

A: Obviously, Jim Lee. A lot of newer artists. Ed Benes. Unfortunately, sorry, I can't just rattle them off the top of my head. But you know, basically, a lot of just comic book style, they really push the superhero proportions and the stylized characters and the kind of clean lines that get the character across without having a ton of details. So I like kind of that style as well.

Q: Being a comic book fan and playing games when you were growing up, did you find it frustrating that oftentimes companies would seem to concern themselves more with getting the license than being true to the character on the back end?

A: Yeah, very much so.

Q: And did you feel like if you were ever able to do it that you would make sure the authenticity was there?

A: Yeah, I was hoping to keep it more as a character than a brand. Because that's, a lot of times, what the big guys think of it as. "Oh, Batman is the brand." I think, "No, Batman was a cool character who had his parents killed," and his whole backstory. So, you know, as much as I could, but obviously, those are not my property, so I can't really—

Q: But I'm saying grow or not—

A: Well, yeah.

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Q: When you're growing up, playing those games, and then you finally have a chance to do it yourself, that has to be pretty cool.

A: Oh, yeah, definitely cool. Yeah. I mean, again, working on—I don't know how much DC stuff we can talk about—but to be able to work on Batman and Joker and those kinds of characters was also a really cool thing because to kind of mix those genres was like, "Hey, that's cool." That's cool for me.

Q: Can you discuss the Mortal Kombat art style for this title and your contributions to it? How it's similar, how it's different, how it's evolved…

A: We really tried to make things more realistic and kind of dirtier or grittier or more real world, even though we are talking about characters who throw ice and summon fire, things like that. But a piece of leather, you know, there's still real-world examples of leather. So if there's leather on the costume, hopefully it looks like actual pieces of leather. And actually, kind of getting back to the clean lines of the comic book stuff, a lot of our characters have polygons cut out for material changes, which keeps, just between MID mapping and compression, it keeps the nice, crisp seam between, say, a shirt and your skin, whereas a lot of times in the past, it would just be this whole arm is one piece.

You just draw the shirt in where it lies. You draw the arm in, and sometimes, you can have a really nasty, blurry line where the two meet up. So there's a lot of...taking the time to cut out all the separate elements so that they can hold up as cleanly as possible when using that on them. Then we've got detail on maps for like fabric and leather and stuff like that that actually— We have a separate tiling rate for them so they can tile up really tight, and you can zoom right in on them, and you can see the fabric detail.

Q: Are there toolboxes for that for different leather textures?

A: Yeah, well, some of it is just going online and finding scrapbook leather that you think looks cool and cleaning it up and making it tileable and running a normal matte filter on it. Filter Forge is a great help. You can kind of make tiling, normal mattes, which is really, really handy....

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Q: Try little flags, and then expand it from there.

A: Exactly. That just creates a tiling or the ability to tile, and we just go to town....Like Mileena's costume is actually from a basket-weave pattern from Filter Forge. So weird things like that.

Q: Okay. So you've spent a lot of time on the authenticity and the materials and mixing it in. The other compelling component—the fatalities for the characters. So how have those been amped up?

A: Oh my. Well, there's a lot more slices than there used to be. It usually is just pull the head off, pull the big major parts off. But now you can actually cut through the jawline, so there's a nasty tongue waggling around in some of the fatalities. You can cut down the middle, which we never had before. You can do diagonal slices. Just all kinds of extra cuts you can have then. There's just so much detail that we can do now because of normal maps and just extra polygons, and just having the budget. Ribs and just nasty-looking wet organs. I'm being too gross.

Q: For stuff like that, do you have like a skeleton or musculature at the studio?

A: We have several different internal models. There's a skeleton and the meat, which you see a lot in X-Ray. Those are just separate models that basically live inside the character at the appropriate times. So when the X-Ray turns on, oh, inside the meat and skull, and there it is. And then there's the stumps that happen when you can actually cut, and those are actually on the character all the time. And kind of the same scenario. They only get unhidden when you get dismembered. So there's a lot going on under the hood just to get— And then there's the damage on top of that, which is like the tears in the costume or the gashes that appear in people's skin and stuff like that.

Q: But is there anything in particular other than what you mentioned that you would want to call out or want to make sure would be in the book or that you saw—

A: I guess from this game, I was really pleased to work on Mileena—Mileena was another one of my favorite characters growing up, like MK2. So I actually got to do a decent bit of the concepting on her, which...got handed off after a certain point, but then I got to do the model and the damage for her, so it was kind of the same scenarios. Sonya is obviously more of a real person, and Mileena is more of a monster. It was really fun to actually work on that and get it up to the stage it is and see her

in the demos and everything like that. Had people freaking out that you can actually take her mask off because that's always mysterious, and I love that she seems all sexy.

And then all of a sudden, she rips this mask off, and she's this terror.

Q: Who is your favorite character?

A: I guess there would probably be a top four. It would be Scorpion and Sub-Zero on the male side, and then Sonya and Mileena for the female side. I've always kind of gravitated towards not only their style, but their fighting styles.

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Jon Greenberg, Principal Software Engineer

Q: Okay. Tell us something Mortal Kombat fans don't know about you and your job.

A: Let's see.

Q: We could start with your role in the game.

A: Yeah, I'm the graphics lead, so graphics programming lead. So pretty much every game without exception, we pretty much overhaul the visuals of the engine. It may not necessarily always be apparent to them, but pretty much every game, we go back to basics and decide what we're going to need to modify. So we rip everything apart and put it back together again to try upgrading the visuals and squeeze more blood from the stone, if you will.

Q: Every Mortal Kombat? Is that what you're referring to?

A: Yeah.

Q: Every incarnation. How many have you worked on?

A: I've worked on every game we've done to one extent or another since *Deadly Alliance*.

Q: Kind of a nice segue to the next question. What is the blessing and the curse of working on such an iconic IP as Mortal Kombat?

A: Well, the blessing is specifically from a graphics programmer's point of view; the curse is having to deal with 60 hertz....Most games that you would buy run at 30 hertz, which means that the screen updates 30 times a second. Fighting games, with maybe a couple exceptions, tend to run at 60 hertz, which means the screen updates 60 times a second, which means that you have half the time of which to draw everything in a fighting game that you might in a typical, let's say, first-person shooter.

And while that equates, to the end user whom experiences a smoother game, a game that is much more responsive and much more reactive to what you do, the net result is that computing resources are very limited, and we can only do so much. And the customer may not necessarily appreciate that you have half the time to...construct all the visuals that another game might. So it's always very, very challenging to produce competitive visuals or striking graphics with considerably less time in which to make them.

Q: And then, how about the fact that Mortal Kombat as an IP exists and has existed?

A: Oh, yes. Clearly, so that's the curse. The blessing, clearly, is that it's a very well-known IP. It gets a lot of attention, a lot of focus. It's a game that I can mention, and even my friends who know nothing about the current state of video games know what I'm talking about. My grandmother has heard of it. Everyone has heard of Mortal Kombat. It's not some obscure, weird little, strange little project. It's a part of general culture. So everyone knows what it is, and it makes it much easier to explain what you do for a living to people outside the industry.

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Q: What have you learned about Mortal Kombat while working on it?

A: I've kind of, to some extent, fallen in love with the franchise. I actually was not really a huge Mortal Kombat fan before actually joining the team. I was originally probably more of the *Street Fighter* camp than Mortal Kombat from a strict gameplay point of view.

Q: Back in the '90s?

A: Back in the '90s, yeah. And when we started working_when I started working—on *Deadly Alliance* way back, I very quickly got...really pulled in, and got really, really into the characters and the background and the story, and I've always been...a big fan of like genre fiction and science fiction, and got really caught up in the sort of kooky weirdness and the weird juxtaposition of fantasy and magic and science fiction, and sort of *Big Trouble in Little China* kind of stuff. This weird, weird combination of things.

And it kind of just completely sucked me in to the point where I've been helping out Vogel with the story pretty much since the tail end of *Deadly Alliance* through *Deception* and on. I've been just completely...interested and fascinated and really, really into it. So... part of the reason why I'm still working on it after all this time is that stuff just keeps on ticking for me.

Q: Cool. Passion is genuine for it.

A: Yeah.

Q: What are some inspirations for your work and your work in the game?

A: We tend to look at...I guess it's a wide mix of things. Of cool effects you see in movies. A lot of martial arts films. There's a lot of really iconic imagery in a lot of—

Q: The older-school stuff?

A: No, even the newer stuff. Like, God, I can't remember the guy's name. The Thai kickboxing guy. He's recently gone kind of crazy. I can't remember the guy's name. Sorry. The...Tom Yum Goong, the...Tony Jaa. So like a bunch of his stuff is really, really well filmed. A lot of really breathtaking

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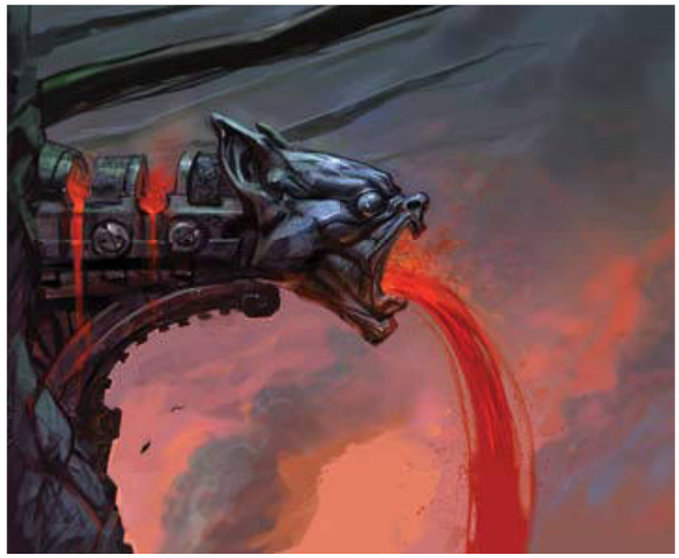

visuals. Not just in the fighting itself, but sort of in the construction of a lot of the fights....Because *MK* crosses into all this sort of weird territory, there's a lot of, "Well, wouldn't it be cool if we did this effect," or, "Wouldn't it be cool if we did that?" And so...we mix a little bit of this kind of secret sauce together, [and] we can get such and such fancy effects, and we can do this or do that.

And a lot of that comes from just random science-fiction movies, or you'll see some like movie where they'll, I don't know, eviscerate someone in a really ridiculous way, and you'll be like, "Wow, we should totally try to like mimic that effect." And some of it comes from completely bizarre areas, too. Like... that Spartacus TV series that was on recently. It has some completely ridiculous-looking and yet very over-the-top gore effects. And there were some pretty hilarious—not that we referenced any of it directly—but some stuff from there where you're like, "Wow, that—"

Q: If you're gonna do it, just go way over the top with it.

A: Yeah. Like more like, "Wow, it doesn't look at all real, but it sells itself really well." And stuff like that.

Q: Let's see. How about just accompanying the Mortal Kombat art style for this game and your contribution?

A: Well...so we met with Ed really early on and talked about, "Okay, so what direction do we want to go?" And...the term "photo-realistic" was thrown out, but obviously, it's sort of always stylized photo-realism. The characters, strictly speaking, are not naturally proportioned. But we set out knowing that, well, we want the characters to look really good in close-up. We want you to be able to smoothly pull back from the character and for them to like look clean. And at the same time, we know we want to be able to rip the characters completely to shreds. We know we want to drown them in blood, practically.

So there's a lot of sitting down and figuring out, "Okay, how can we accommodate that from the art point of view? How can we make metal look like metal and a box look like a box?" All this stuff pulled out, and yet, from a technical point of view, keep performance stable, which is sort of a big, constant challenge. How can we keep a character who is almost completely...naked skin [from] costing the same amount [as], let's say...a character who is completely composed of shiny metal. Or a character who is half-and-half costing the same as every one of those.

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Or a character that has got like lots of facial hair like Kano costing the same as a character who has none. And a big part of the challenge is figuring out ways to provide working text for the artists, both specifically from my point of view. And part of it is providing working text for the artist where they can do all of that and keep performance consistent. Another big side of it was from the environmental point of view. Making the environment's a big push. I'm probably wandering off the question.

But a big push to this game was to make the environments really feel alive. One of the things that we felt for the last while was that the environments were kind of these very static, stale things that just sat there that you kind of ignored while you were fighting. And we wanted them to be distracting, basically. Be these living worlds where you feel that if you just look around the corner, you would see more stuff going on.

Q: Yeah, Mike got into that a little bit, and then Dave did with the talking trees and stuff. Is there a particular moment in the game, is there a particular part in the game—again, part of this section is to give insight to hardcore fans of the Mortal Kombat franchise—that you would like to discuss, that you made contributions to, or that you just think is really cool?

A: I would say...probably one of the most impressive things that was done on the project and that I helped direct, I guess, is the blood tech.

Q: So, you mean blood tech in terms of how blood reacted?

A: Yeah. So from a technical standpoint, there's a lot more going on than might necessarily be readily apparent. When you hit a character and blood flies through the air, that blood is actually checking to see if it's interacting with anything, and if it interacts with an object, it actually turns into a blood splat that hits that character in that place and sticks to them where it hits them. So...there are limitations to how much we can actively turn on frame to frame, or at least there were when we initially put it in, which sort of bows down to the ridiculousness of it.

But the blood flying through the air and hitting characters is basically somewhat accurate. That was an active choice on our part. We could have achieved a lot of it, but we wanted it to really look like if I punch you in the face and that blood spray out of your mouth hits me in the face, that that blood sticks to my

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face, and you can see viscerally the intercommunication of gore between victim and attacker. Right? The attacker gets showered with the victim's blood. And to that effect, each character—because not everyone is necessarily human in Mortal Kombat—each character has their own unique blood color. So punching Reptile means you can get showered in green blood.

Meanwhile, it might drip all over Reptile and stuff.

Q: Does that affect most of the environments as well?

A: Yeah. It's the same stuff flying. If it happens to not hit a character, it can land on the environment and stick to the floor, and really, the pit bottom; then it shows a lot of the stuff to a sort of an over-the-top extreme extent. But that's probably the single most visually powerful thing that we did.

Q: Last question. Who is your favorite ***MK*** character and why?

A: Probably the character...I like the most—it's probably sort of a pretty straightforward, generic answer—but it's probably Scorpion. To me, he's the most iconic, most clearly superhero-like in design with where we've taken him the last ten years or so. I guess he started off as kind of a generic character. He has transformed into this sort of almost costume superhero. And really has his own visual— Even though we pretty drastically change his costume every game, he's somehow still completely recognizable and still has the same kind of visual flair and visual style to him that can be recognized despite, game to game, looking almost completely different, which...I think that's almost unique. Right? I don't think there are a lot of franchises where you can really completely overhaul the entire costume of a character and really still have the character be straightforwardly, like straight-up, recognizable by anyone who knows the franchise at all. They really don't tend to do that with comic book characters too much.

Q: Right. I take it like Spider-Man, Venom, that's not quite the same. Or Batman. There's been a lot of incarnations, but still, it looks pretty much the same. Like Scorpion.

A: Yeah. Scorpion. If you compare like the ***MK1*** Scorpion versus say the current game Scorpion, they're night and day. They're completely different.

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Dave Pindara, Technical Art Lead

Q: What have been some highlights of working on this incarnation of Mortal Kombat?

A: For myself and the group that I work for, we are responsible for creating all the environments of the game, and I think the highlight for a lot of us was going back to revisit the original games and taking those iconic arenas that a lot of people have come to...[associate] with *Mortal Kombat* and...to update them into what we're creating for this generation.

Q: And what was the blessing and curse of that, of having that preexisting—I'm sure it was both. Right?

A: Definitely. The blessing was definitely if we could only have done this—we got a lot of feedback. Oh, it would have been really cool if we could do this. And then the expectations started to go up, and then it became, "Well, let's try and do this," or, "Let's try and do that," and then it became, "Oh, it would be really cool." And then our art director, Steve Barry, would always give us the "And for the bonus round, let's see if we can do this."

Q: It was direction.

A: It was great because they constantly pushed the limits, and it really challenged the guys a lot to come up with very interesting ways for us to get all these looks and...features...which [for the] most part, had never really been in a Mortal Kombat game before. And get that all to function in our game at 60 frames a second within our memory limitations and all that.

Q: What have you learned about Mortal Kombat while on the job?

A: I learned a tremendous amount about Mortal Kombat. I only joined Mortal Kombat at about midway through the *MK versus DC* project.

Q: So what year was that?

A: About two and a half years ago, three years ago maybe...So there was a lot of catch-up to do. Learn who the characters are, learn who—

Q: You are typically familiar with mainstream, from a distance, basically—

A: Right, but it's like this faction versus this faction, this realm versus this realm, and who belongs to what, and who has died in the past and who hasn't died in the past, and who has come back, and who is magic and who is this. So it was great to kind of delve into that a little bit.

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Q: Right. Do you have any notable stories from development? Any interesting stories, any big hurdles that you're proud the team overcame? You mentioned how they kept going through the bonus round and stuff. Are there any breakthroughs or interesting little anecdotal stories?

A: We spent a lot of time on preproduction of this game because we knew that we were going to have to make an awful lot with a very small team in a relatively short time frame.

Q: Make an awful lot of—

A: Environments, backgrounds. So we would spend a tremendous amount of time with Steve and with Ed going through the art direction of a level, what needed to go into a level, how it was going to look. We would do concept after concept after concept to really refine the look of the level. When we'd get to the end, it became, "Let's cut it up. How are we going to actually make this?" And "This small group of guys [is] going to make this level, and this small group is going to make this level."

We kind of ran with that for most of the project. Three guys make a level. These three guys make another level, and they run in tandem as we do this. The living forest was a pretty radical departure from the original in the look of the game. We had built it based on the original concept layout, and for the people that play a lot of it, when the level starts. In every case, the level starts with kind of like the money shot, the what we're looking at in the level. And when we had originally built that level, that section was all the way to the left of the arena, of the fight line.

It was only a couple of meters behind the fighters until they got to the end. And everything else was all the way at the other end....And then, about two months before we did our very first submission, we started to get feedback from QA that it's kind of unfair to the fighters that they take two steps and they're at the end of the arena. And we were kind of like, "We're done with that. We're finished with that level." And so we had to literally take all the assets and reposition the whole level so that we were... fair [to the] fighters. It had a much better game play to it.

And at the end of the day, it really worked itself out so well... but then, a month and a half after submission, we decided to put a level fatality into that level. So by the time we got everything back in place, it worked out really great. And no small effort, but no small unscheduled effort.

Q: Yeah, exactly.

A: But we got it in place. I think it turned out fantastic.

Q: What are some of your inspirations for your art and the art that you used in the game other than the baseline that existed beforehand?

A: I think a lot of the artists, we draw from almost everything that's out there. You know, from games and from movies and from television and from art in general. Everyone kind of has a style to them. Everybody kind of has what they appreciate. "Hey, this guy is much more organic oriented. This guy is much more technology oriented." So we tried to take advantage of that and have those artists that were so inclined to go down this path and those that were so inclined to go down that path.

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For myself, I think it's very...very futurist. I mean, I really like that type of environment rather than something that's just common, everyday, and you're playing to escape. And so because we're playing to escape, that kind of just adds to that.

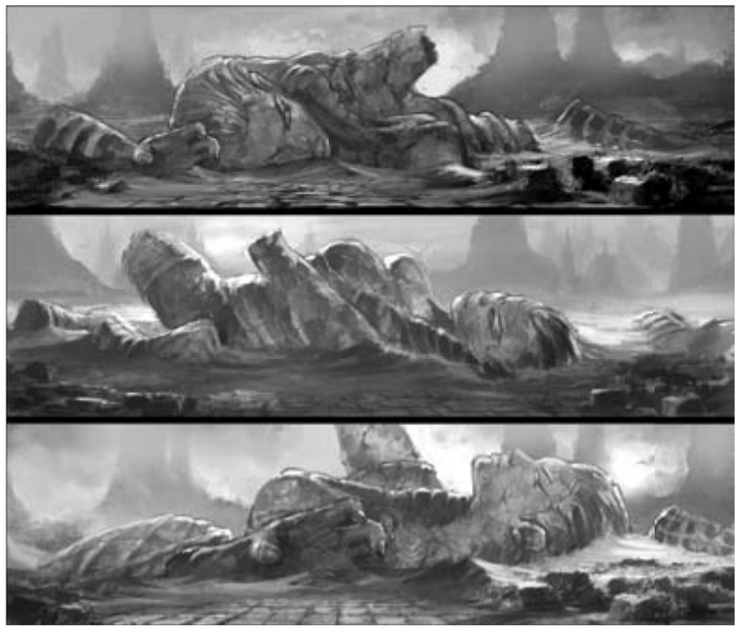
Q: What about any artists, famous artists, futurist-type artists?

A: I'm kind of old school to a point, so I really like some of the Anton Furst work that he did from the original Batman movies. Well, not the original, but... it's just such a—

Q: Organic. I hear you. Would you like to discuss the style of art for this game and your contributions to it or what you feel are your contributions?

A: We really tried to make things slightly more grounded in reality, slightly. We wanted to have—

Q: For example...



A: Well, go back to the living forest. Hey, we're going to have talking trees. Well, that would be really nice to just put a couple of eyeballs and some teeth into the front of the tree, but we really wanted to have all the knots and everything from an old weathered tree kind of form the face of that tree, and kind of blend in with vines around it. Some of the Outworld levels, like the Pit, for instance. We still have some touches of reality to it, but they're so far-fetched in the background of, "Hey, here's all these people."

If you look really close in the background there, you'll see giant spiked mountains that people [have] come to know, but if you look really close, you can see there's little caves there and little lights flickering in the background, and there's people actually living in those caves. Little things like that. In the pit bottom, if you look in the background, you'll see that we put some critters in the background kind of scavenging around and picking at the bones that fell at it from on top and landed on the bottom. So it's trying to pull those little pieces in. Kind of ground the level. Not make it look like it really belongs there.

Q: Right. Who is your favorite Mortal Kombat character and why?

A: Raiden is the man. He's so calm. He's got it all under control the whole time. He's always looking out for the benefit of everybody, and he's got just amazing powers that he can play with. But at the same time, [with] a character like Smoke...it's...not really clear what's going on there and not really clear what he's

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all about. And that kind of makes it fun to play because it's not just strictly a good person.

Q: Right. One more question. Is there a specific contribution that jumps out at you that you made that players of the game might not otherwise know? It doesn't have to be a contribution. Just insight. You mentioned a couple cool ones already, like the caves flickering in the background and stuff.

A: Things that [I did?] Personally?

Q: Yeah. That either you did or you just think is really cool.

A: I'll give you both. For myself personally, we had to do— After we did a couple of passes, our group did a couple of passes of the control moving. That kind of sets the scenes. And some of the passes...went by, and we thought that since this was the first thing that people were going to see, we really needed to put more effort into it. And it just so happened that as that started to come up, some of the environment team was just starting to wind down, and we had just started wrapping up some of the levels. So a few of us got together and basically reworked a lot of that from the beginning.

Gave a whole new geometry pass to a lot of pieces, a whole new lighting pass to both the regular static and the dynamic work all the way through the first. I don't know, that movie is like four minutes or something like that. And we gave that a whole new pass, and I think it really...it so helped the look of how things were. Not to take anything away from the cinematics guys, because they did some really tremendous stuff, but just to let us do a little more polish because that was going to all come out of our engine....It didn't go to another company to prerender. It all came through our groups and through our cinema and through our rendering system.

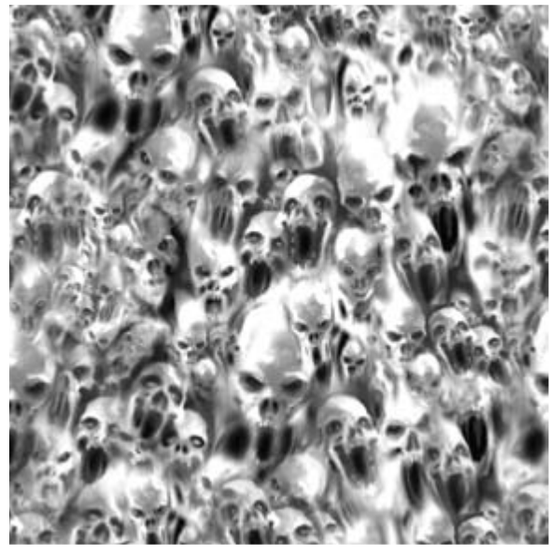
So it was really nice to be able to do it here, review it, change it, and I'm really proud of the effort that we did to it. It really looks good.

Q: And when does that appear?

A: That's the very first thing you'll see when you put the disc in after all the legal mumbo jumbo.

Q: Very cool.

A: I think it really turned out for the better for everybody. It really kind of sets the stage.



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We recently got a chance to speak with some of the artists from Teenage Riot Records, the minds (in conjunction with WaterTower Music) behind the amazing album *Mortal Kombat: Songs Inspired by the Warriors*, and asked them to share some thoughts on Mortal Kombat, their music, and how they arrived at their respective theme songs.

Read what they had to say, and then download your free Bird Peterson track!

Felix Cartal

This project was an exciting change of pace from making my own dance track or a remix. The chance to make something aggressive for Kung Lao and be a part of the *Mortal Kombat* series was unreal. Loved the challenge of trying to put a modern spin on some of the original techno sounds that the *Mortal Kombat* game had pioneered. Amazing project.

Run DMT

The circumstances surrounding our involvement with the *Mortal Kombat* franchise are somewhat serendipitous. No more than a day before we were approached with the opportunity, we had been discussing how cool it would be to create music for video games, specifically *Mortal Kombat*. Needless to say, it was a bit on the mind-blowing side when the wishful thought became a reality. We selected Baraka because he is by far the most aesthetically menacing. Gigantic steel claws and a mouth full of razor-sharp teeth provided more than enough inspiration for the track. When it came to the actual production, it took us a little time to create the right sound that would not only be pleasing to listeners, but [also] encapsulate the character of Baraka, in all of his goblinesque glory. Being a part of this project has been surreal and very fulfilling. We feel really good about being included in a pool of such talented artists and producers, and we are definitely excited about seeing the game in action.

Bird Peterson

When I was in third grade, *Mortal Kombat* came out for the Sega Genesis, and I wasn't allowed to play it. Apparently right before its release, they did a couple stories on the news about how children were playing this game and then pushing each other into spike pits or freezing each other and then uppercutting them to pieces. So I used to sneak into the arcade next to my orthodontist in Dallas and play the arcade version until my mom came to pick me up. Needless to say, I finally got caught. And here I am, a little less than 20 years later, and I'm getting that old familiar thirst for blood. When I was told I could pick what character I wanted, my face fell off. So many to choose from, so, so many. But which one really did the trick? Which one made me feel like a crazy nine-year-old who drank too much Hawaiian Punch? And suddenly it was all so clear: the big, four-armed wizard of skull crushing named Goro. This was the guy! He was a surprise boss and they even used stop-motion to create his moves (oh, hey, Clay Fighter). He was the king of sugar-crazed, uncontrollable children. He was the epitome of inappropriate, according to mothers across Texas.

I wanted to make a monster of a song, so I just made the most brutal bass I could and peppered in some vintage '80s synth breakdowns. Polish it off with some grizzly sound effects, rusty chains, and an intro that scared the crap out of my cat, and there you are: "Goro's Theme." This is the perfect song for grabbing a friend with two hands and beating the living crap out of them with your other two hands.

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Acknowledgments

Special thanks to WaterTower Music and the folks at Teenage Riot Records: Jamal Dauda, Adrian Martinez, Felix Cartal, JFK of MSTRKRFT, Run DMT, and Bird Peterson for making this possible.

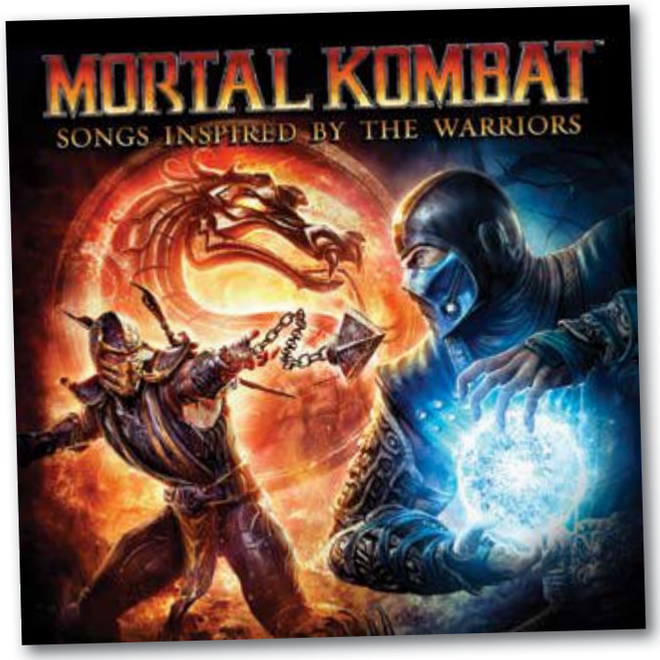
Note

The makers of this album, game, and book—and especially Bird Peterson—do not condone "pushing each other into spike pits or freezing each other and then uppercutting them to pieces" or "grabbing a friend with two hands and beating the living crap out of them with your other two hands" in real life. Doing it in the game, on the other hand, is totally acceptable.

Prima Games Free Track
Bird Peterson's 'Horse Music'

To download your free track, Bird Peterson's "Horse Music," courtesy of Prima Games and Teenage Riot Records, please visit:

www.PrimaGames.com/MK
And use your free download code
FINISHHIM!



TRACK LIST

1. Deathstalker (Scorpion's Theme)—JFK of MSTRKRFT
2. Mileena's Theme—Tokimonsta
3. Helado (Sub-Zero's Theme)—Harvard Bass
4. Liu Kang's Theme—Congorock
5. Goro's Theme—Bird Peterson
6. Reptile's Theme—Skrillex
7. Raiden's Theme—9th Wonder
8. Johnny Cage's Theme—LA Riots
9. Baraka's Theme—Run DMT
10. Kung Lao's Theme—Felix Cartal
11. Kano's Theme—Them Jeans
12. Shao Kahn's Theme—Sound Of Stereo

WATERTOWER MUSIC

TEENAGE RIOT

Mortal Kombat: Songs Inspired by the Warriors is available anywhere music is sold.

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MORTAL KOMBAT™

PRIMA Official Game Guide

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